

# Bard

Bard College  
Bard Digital Commons

---

Senior Projects Spring 2017

Bard Undergraduate Senior Projects

---

Spring 2017

## Excluded from Humanity: the Effects of Implicit Dehumanizing Views Toward Black Individuals in the Media

Joshua Velette  
Bard College, [jv1398@bard.edu](mailto:jv1398@bard.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/senproj\\_s2017](https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/senproj_s2017)



Part of the [Social Psychology Commons](#)



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 License](#).

---

### Recommended Citation

Velette, Joshua, "Excluded from Humanity: the Effects of Implicit Dehumanizing Views Toward Black Individuals in the Media" (2017). *Senior Projects Spring 2017*. 252.  
[https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/senproj\\_s2017/252](https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/senproj_s2017/252)

This Open Access work is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been provided to you by Bard College's Stevenson Library with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this work in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@bard.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@bard.edu).

Bard

Excluded from Humanity: the Effects of Implicit Dehumanizing Views Toward Black  
Individuals in the Media

Senior Project submitted to  
The Division of Science, Mathematics and Computing  
of Bard College

by  
Joshua Velette

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York  
May 2017



## Acknowledgements

Thank you Prof. Kristin Lane for being such a great and encouraging advisor this past year. I truly appreciate your support not only throughout this process but also throughout my entire time at Bard.

Thank you Jane Duffstein and all my BEOP Family, as well as all of my friends, for the much needed love and support! Having you as a support system these past years truly made all the difference. I cannot thank you enough.

To Jon, Liz, Ha, and everyone back home pushed me to see my potential when I could not see it myself, thank you!

Para mis padres Arismendy y Rhada, el más grande reconocimiento. Gracias por el apoyo incondicional a través de los años y por nunca poner en duda mi esfuerzo y mi capacidad. Gracias aún más por todos sus sacrificios para ayudarme a llegar aquí. Espero haberlos hecho orgullosos.



## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Literature Review</b>	<b>2</b>
Types of Dehumanization	6
Racial Disparities and the Dehumanization of Black Individuals	13
Media's Role in Dehumanization of Black Individuals	18
The Present Study	21
<b>Method</b>	<b>22</b>
Participants	22
Design	23
Materials	23
News Article	23
Images	25
Video clip	25
Dehumanization IAT	26
Explicit Self-report Measures	28
Procedure	28
<b>Results</b>	<b>29</b>
Data Preparation	29
IAT Scores	29
Preliminary Analyses	30
Main Analyses	30
Main Effects	31
Two-way Interactions	32
Three-way Interactions	33
Explicit Measures	33
Correlations	34
<b>Discussion</b>	<b>34</b>
Review of the Study	34
IAT Score Results	35
Explicit Measures Results	39
Limitations	40
Participants	40
Method	41
Future Directions	42
Conclusion	43
<b>References</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Figures</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>56</b>



### **Abstract**

Dehumanization—a process by which certain individuals and/or social groups are denied complete human status—has been researched extensively in psychology. Previous research on dehumanization has identified several social groups such as the poor (Haslam & Loughnan, 2014), immigrants, refugees (Esses, Medianu, & Lawson, 2013), women (Rudman & Mescher, 2012) and Black people (Goff, Eberhardt, Williams, & Jackson, 2008). Through frameworks such as the Infrahumanization theory (Leyens et al., 2003) and the dual model for dehumanization (Haslam, 2006), it has been found that out-groups may be implicitly dehumanized. The social group of interest to the present study is Black individuals. This groups tends to be denied “uniquely human,” or secondary emotions, which subsequently qualifies them as animals; in their case specifically as apes. This specific phenomenon is known as “animalistic” dehumanization (Haslam, 2006). Furthermore, evidence suggests that the media may work as a mechanism through which dehumanization of Black people, as apes, is spread (Goff et al., 2008; Santa Ana, 2002). The present empirical study assessed the effects of implicitly dehumanizing towards Black people present in the media in a manner that, to my knowledge, has yet to be tested in the literature. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions. They were either exposed to or not exposed to implicitly dehumanizing words towards Black individuals, and shown either a Black, or White assailant, followed by a dehumanization IAT and an explicit measures questionnaire. Results suggests that overall, people tend to associate Black individuals with apes, and that Black people, at least in this study, tend to so more than White people.



### **Literature Review**

In his book *The Nazi Doctors*, psychiatrist Robert Lifton (2000) speaks of the processes that enabled Nazi doctors and scientists to perform atrocious experiments on concentration camp prisoners, recognizing ‘doubling’—the creation of ‘another’ self—as a main mechanism. Through this, a Nazi doctor would create an original, or ordinary self, in addition to what Lifton calls an “Auschwitz self,” which subscribes to a different set of ideologies (mainly guided by the realization that Jews were not human) to facilitate their actions without the psychological burden of considering themselves killers (Lifton, 1986). Implicit in this ‘doubling’ mechanism, and beyond the construction of multiple selves, is the removal of a group of individuals (in this case, Jewish individuals) from the Auschwitz doctors’ moral community. For them, some people were considered patients who should be cared for and healed, while others—by the invention of the other self—were not acknowledged as ‘human,’ much less as ‘medical patients’ worthy of ethical and humane treatment (Opotow, 1990). While extreme and abominable, the Holocaust is a powerful example of the potential outcomes of dehumanizing an outgroup.

Dehumanization is the act of denying an individual or social group complete human status. This process has been identified by psychologists, as well as experts of other fields, as a necessary step in the development, acceptance and normalization of violence toward a particular group (Opotow, 1990). Previous research on dehumanization has identified several social, ethnic and racial groups that are dehumanized. The poor (Loughnan et al., 2014), immigrants, refugees (Esses, Medianu, & Lawson, 2013), Japanese (Andrighetto, Baldissarri, Lattanzio & Volpato, 2014), women (Rudman & Mescher, 2012) and Black people (Goff, Eberhardt, Williams, & Jackson, 2008; Eberhardt, Goff, Purdie, & Davies, 2004) are among the outgroups that in one form or the other are dehumanized by certain groups.

It has been proposed that the process of dehumanization in general occurs through moral exclusion; that is, when a particular individual or group of people is perceived as “outside of the boundary in which moral values, rules, and considerations of fairness apply” (Opotow, 1990, p. 1). Those who are perceived as outside the boundaries of one’s moral communities come to be seen as a plague, undeserving and expandable—through intergroup conflict, disconnections triggering negative/aggressive attitudes and behaviors, etc. (Opotow, 1990, p. 7). As this becomes a collectively held view, psychological and physical harm toward their group becomes more appropriate and normalized.

In its most extreme cases—as mentioned above—dehumanization takes the form of a blatant, explicit and direct denial of humanness. For instance, Middle-class Romanians in a discussion regarding the Romany (gypsy), stated the following: “they like living in the dirt... there is... a block especially built for them and they have eaten it from the ground like rats” (Tileaga, 2007). In this specific case, the distinction between ‘*them*’ and ‘*us*’ imbedded in the language used draws a moral boundary and situates the Romany as transgressors. Furthermore, their humanity is to some extent denied through the explicitly demeaning language that is used—outright comparison to a rat. Research on human-animal comparisons suggests that although not all animal metaphors are considered offensive (e.g. those directed at ingroup members), metaphors categorized as highly offensive can be distinguished as either disgusting or degrading (Haslam, Loughnan, & Sun, 2011). In a context of intergroup tension, the use of the rat metaphor is especially troubling due to its content of depravity and disagreeableness; those towards whom these metaphors are directed begin to be perceived as morally disgusting, arguably because of the comparison to an animal that is disliked and evokes disgust (Haslam, Loughnan, & Sun, 2011).

Many early socio-moral discussions of moral exclusion and other markers of dehumanization have argued that adverse social circumstances are responsible for the conditions necessary for individuals to dehumanize and subsequently harm or otherwise oppress others. These circumstances, although not explicitly identified, foster the development of negative stereotypes that go on to inform interpretations of the behavior of the group towards which the stereotypes are directed, creating a perceived distinction in moral values (Schwartz & Struch, 1989; Bar-Tal, 1989). Indeed, research on this has shown that aggression towards outgroups was mediated by perceived dissimilarity of values by ingroup members (Schwartz & Struch, 1989).

Dehumanization, however, is not always as blatant as to indicate a perceived distinction of values, helpfulness and/or honesty that incites—or further perpetuates—intergroup aggression, like suggested above. Nowadays, actually, dehumanizing views appear to be employed in a much more subtle manner and—contrary to what some of the earlier socio-moral theories of dehumanization had hypothesized in regards to what drives ‘ordinary people’ to dehumanize (Opotow, 1990; Schwartz & Struch, 1989; Bar-Tal, 1989)—these views are present even in the absence of significant intergroup antipathy.

The research on social cognition is especially relevant for the understanding of dehumanization in the absence of intergroup tension. Social cognition refers to a higher-order cognitive process consisting of the acknowledgement that a target has an “internal life;” that is, understanding that a certain individual has independent cognitive and emotional experiences (Harris & Fiske, 2011). Research done under the framework of the stereotype content model (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Harris & Fiske, 2001), suggests that societal groups are considered in terms of intending help or harm—which they identify as warmth—and simultaneously as either capable or not of acting in accordance to said intentions—which they

identify as competence; these can be assigned in terms of low or high warmth (or competence). Furthermore, the four possible combinations in these dimensions produce four different emotions toward social groups: pride, envy, disgust, and pity. This research has identified different social groups and the place they occupy within this framework. For instance, rich people are stereotyped as high on competence, but low on warmth; this specific combination fosters envy (Harris & Fiske, 2006).

Considering the neurological basis of dehumanization, evidence suggests that individuals fail to engage in social cognition when dealing with members of highly stigmatized groups (e.g. homeless, immigrants). When viewing photographs previously tested to reliably elicit disgust (as evidenced by attributed ratings of low-competence and low-warmth), participants showed no significant activation in the medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC), an area typically recruited for social cognition, and showed an exaggerated reaction of the amygdala and insula, which is consistent with disgust (Harris et al., 2006). Furthermore, outwardly negative attitudes toward these groups need not be present for these results to be observed, suggesting that dehumanizing views may be present and exercise an active role below the threshold of consciousness; that is to say, dehumanization may occur at an implicit level.

Inability to infer the emotional state of outgroup members—thereby attributing to them a lesser human essence—may also constitute implicit dehumanization. In a study conducted two weeks after Hurricane Katrina, White and nonWhite participants were asked to make inferences about the emotional state of ingroup and outgroup victims; these inferences were then examined to see if they predicted willingness of intergroup assistance. Results indicated that both White and nonWhite participants were less likely to attribute uniquely human, or “secondary,” emotions (e.g. anguish, grief) to outgroup members; this suggests an inability to infer their

emotional state. It is worth noting that these were individual outgroup and ingroup victims; researchers pointed out that, according to previous research, dehumanization only occurred when viewing outgroup members as a group; the effect, until then, was not present when an outgroup member was individualized (Cuddy et al., 2007). For primary emotions—those believed to be experienced by humans and nonhumans alike (e.g. fear, sadness, rage)—results found no differences in inferences between ingroup and outgroup members.

Furthermore, the inference of an emotional state also predicted intergroup willingness to help, such that inability to attribute uniquely human emotions to outgroup victims reduced participants' intentions to volunteer to help said victims (Cuddy et al., 2007). By demonstrating differences in the way in which people infer the emotional states of outgroups compared to ingroups in an individualized manner, this research proposes a connection between denial of emotional experience—which constitutes dehumanized perception—and reduced helping after a devastating, real-life incident. This suggests that dehumanization does affect considerations of fairness and moral values under real circumstances. More importantly, the participants in this study did not know they were dehumanizing the outgroup—they did so implicitly. In this sense, although not similar in their most visible and physical manifestations, implicitly dehumanizing views may be similar to openly dehumanizing ones in that they both appear to promote the perception of outgroup members as less than human.

### **Types of Dehumanization**

In a discussion about the perception of others' humanity, Schwartz and Struch (1989) suggested that for ingroup members, those in the outgroup are perceived—at least to some extent—as observing different moral values and that this is what is reflected in the “lesser degree” of humanity that they are subsequently afforded. That is, there are fundamental

differences between ingroup and outgroup members and this informs the extent to which the “other” groups are treated like humans. In support of their theory, as previously mentioned, their research suggests just that; they found that perceived differences in moral values predicted aggression toward outgroup members (Schwartz & Struch, 1989).

This line of thinking falls under the psychological essentialism perspective, according to which individuals attribute ‘essences’ to social groups (Leyens, Paladino, Torres, Demoulin, Rodriguez, & Gaunt, 2000; Leyens, Rodríguez, Torres, Gaunt, Paladino, Vaes, & Demoulin, 2001). The essences attributed to groups are believed to define their nature, identify characteristics that unite their members, and distinguish one group from others (Leyens et al., 2001). It is suggested that—given the presence of ethnocentrism and the fact that people are more preoccupied with the well being of their own group—when individuals make group distinctions relying on essence, they will attribute more ‘human essence’ to their ingroup than to outgroups. By making this essentialist distinction, they are only assigning to the outgroup an inhuman essence—a lesser degree of humanity.

The ‘human essence,’ though encompassing different things, is operationalized as uniquely human, or “secondary,” emotions (e.g. envy, disgust, pride). While primary emotions (fear, rage, sadness) are believed to be experienced by humans and nonhumans alike—as they are biologically based responses—secondary emotions are specific to humans, are far more complex than primary ones, last longer, and involve morality (Ekman, 1992; Leyens, 2001). Researchers proposed that these secondary emotions would be attributed less often to outgroups compared to ingroup members, and that this pattern would constitute a subtle denial of the outgroup members’ humanity. This theory is known as the Inhumanization theory (Leyens et al., 2001). Through this theoretical framework, researchers have established which

characteristics are uniquely human, and examined the differential attribution of said characteristics to ingroups and outgroups (Loughnan, Haslam, & Kashima, 2009).

Furthermore, it is not only people who are part of the privileged groups that tend to inhumanize others; ingroups, as well as outgroups, engage in inhumanization from their own perspective (Leyens et al., 2003). As other research has suggested, however, this claim does not consider the unequal dehumanizing force of the groups at hand, overlooking—as will be discussed later in this section—not only the fact that some forms of dehumanization are more detrimental simply due to the position of group that holds said views, but also the unjust relations that gave rise to them in the first place. It is also worth noting, as Goff and colleagues (Goff et al., 2008) point out, that this research labels the process ‘inhumanization’ as opposed to ‘dehumanization.’ Given the morally charged meaning of *dehumanization* as a word, they suggest, the use of *inhumanization* better highlights the subtlety and everyday aspect of the phenomenon without compromising the former term’s meaning (Goff et al., 2008). For the purpose of the present study, however, inhumanization *constitutes* dehumanization.

In an attempt to further expand the research on dehumanization and contribute to the development of the theoretical model described above, Haslam (2006) proposed an idea that sought to take into account previous work on many different areas of dehumanization, such as moral exclusion, gender and dehumanization, technology, delegitimization, etc., with the intention of creating an integrative model. It proposed that humanness may be categorized by attributes that are either unique to humans or essential to being human. These “two senses of humanness” were labeled human uniqueness and human nature, respectively (Haslam, 2006; Haslam & Loughnan, 2014; Loughnan, Haslam, & Kashima, 2009). Borrowing from previous work on inhumanization, the theory defines uniquely human characteristics as those

distinguishing humans from the larger category of animals; however, it is stressed that humanness may also be approached and understood in terms that are noncomparative and are central to humanity, as well as universally shared (Haslam, Bain, Douge, Lee & Bastian, 2005; Haslam, 2006). The latter is what constitutes what is known as human nature.

There exists well-replicated evidence supporting the existence of the two senses of humanness. Previous research—focused specifically on uniquely human emotions—found that laypeople are able to explicitly differentiate between uniquely human emotions and “non-uniquely human” or primary emotions (Demoulin, Leyens, Paladino, Rodríguez-Torres, Rodríguez-Perez, & Dovidio, 2004). This study also found that individuals also make these distinctions implicitly, as participants were faster to associate uniquely human emotions with humans than with animals in an implicit associations test. Additionally, participants deemed uniquely human emotions as more cognitively demanding, internally caused, not universal, of longer duration and involving morals. “Non-uniquely human” emotions, on the other hand, were deemed less cognitively demanding, caused by external factors, less related to morals, universal, and manifesting themselves earlier in life (Demoulin et al., 2004). Virtually the same findings were obtained in another study examining people’s judgments of the extent to which certain traits were part of either human uniqueness or part of human nature (Haslam et al., 2005). As one could suppose by the nature of these considerations, studies found the two senses of humanness to be negatively correlated (Haslam et al., 2005). Taken together, all these findings suggest that distinctions between the two senses of humanness are present and that individuals rely on said distinctions when considering humans and/or animals. Furthermore, given the results of the implicit study, one could imagine the influence that these words may have on people, who are



not usually assessing their choice of words as “non-uniquely human” or “uniquely human” (Demoulin et al., 2004).

Continuing with the proposed integrative model, Haslam (2006) inferred that if there exist two senses of humanness, there should similarly exist two corresponding forms of dehumanization. When individuals are denied human uniqueness, they are seen as lacking self-control, intelligence, rationality and refinement, while simultaneously being judged as coarse, uncultured, morally deplorable and childlike (as they are seen as lacking characteristics arising later in development). Ultimately being regarded as missing those characteristics separating humans from animals, people denied human uniqueness may be dehumanized in an “animalistic” manner (Haslam, 2006; Haslam & Loughnan, 2014).

Moreover, those who are denied human nature are seen as lacking warmth, emotion, openness, individuality and depth, while simultaneously being judged as cold, rigid, and interchangeable with others of their kind (as individuals are denied agency). Although the concept of human nature in the relevant context, as previously mentioned, seeks to present humanness in a noncomparative sense—that is, it does not require to be pinned in contrast with anything (as it tends to be the case with animalistic dehumanization)—the denial of human nature erases the shared and central qualities of humanness, and thus blurs the distinction between people and machines. Being regarded as missing those characteristics distinguishing people from automata, those who are denied human nature may be dehumanized in a “mechanistic” form (Haslam, 2006; Haslam & Loughnan, 2014) (See Figure 1). Thus, those who are denied human uniqueness are subtly or explicitly likened to animals (animalistic dehumanization), while those who are denied human nature are likened to automata (mechanistic dehumanization). More importantly—and relevant to the present study—the model holds that,

through the aforementioned processes, dehumanization becomes an everyday social phenomenon, originating from ordinary processes used in socialization (Haslam, 2006); this model came to be known as the dual model of dehumanization.

The advances made in the infrahumanization theory (Leyens et al., 2001; Leyens et al., 2003) and the dual model of dehumanization focused on the denial of emotions and human attributes (respectively) to certain groups. However, another section of dehumanization research has approached the study of this phenomenon by focusing directly on the likening of outgroups and their members to nonhumans. These two types of approaches have been identified as attribute-based dehumanization and metaphor-based dehumanization, respectively. The bulk of the empirical research on metaphor-based dehumanization has investigated the perceived likeness of outgroup members with animals. For instance, research has found—across several studies with computerized and pen-and-paper IAT—that individuals are more likely to attribute “animal-related” words (e.g. *mongrel*, *creature*, *feral*) to outgroups compared to ingroup members, while attributing “human-related” words (e.g. *husband*, *people*, *citizen*) to the outgroup significantly more often than to the ingroup (Vicki, Winchester, Titshall, Chisango, Pina & Russell, 2006). Other research has found that, compared to those primed with White faces and neutral images, participants who were primed with Black faces in a “degraded objects” paradigm required significantly less frames in order to identify the image of a monkey (Goff, Eberhardt, Williams, & Jackson, 2008).

Although comparisons to animals are studied more frequently in this research, some has looked into the likeness of certain groups with robots. A study examining the implicit associations among humanness traits, social groups and types of nonhumans through a go/no-go task (Nosek & Bajani, 2001) found that, business people—a group stereotyped as lacking

emotions and openness (traits associated with the human nature sense of humanness)—were implicitly associated more with robots than with animals (Loughnan & Haslam, 2007).

As one considers the attribute-based and metaphor-based approaches to research into dehumanization, it is important to note that—though in different manners—both approaches make the animal/automata separation. While attribute-based dehumanization, as the name suggests, makes this distinction through the differential attribution of uniquely human and human nature characteristics, leading then to their respective forms of dehumanization, metaphor-based dehumanization focuses on the literal comparison between humans and nonhumans. It is also worth noting that, when initially proposed, the dual model of dehumanization (Haslam, 2006) simply had a theoretical connection between metaphor-based and attribute-based forms of dehumanization. That is, no empirical evidence existed directly linking the denial of human uniqueness (or human nature) to the likeness of individuals with animals (or automata), or vice versa.

Research by Loughnan, Haslam and Kashima (2009), however, provided evidence for the theoretical link between denial of human uniqueness and animalization, and denial of human nature and mechanization, proposed by the dual model of dehumanization. For this research, two studies were conducted using the “novel group paradigm,” whereby participants are provided with positive or negative information about a completely fictitious group, making them form and report implicit and explicit attitudes (Gregg, Seibt & Bajani, 2006). Through this framework, participants read descriptions that dehumanized the novel group in either a metaphor-based or attribute-based form.

Results found that, not only did participants appropriately dehumanize the novel group, but they were also able to infer characteristics consistent with the denial of a type of humanness

(e.g. human nature) from the corresponding nonhuman comparisons (e.g. robot-like) and vice versa—in manner consistent with the stated hypothesis. Put simply, the results provided a reciprocal causal link between attribute-based and metaphor-based dehumanization; denying one type of humanness may lead individuals to infer the corresponding dehumanizing metaphor, and vice versa. For example, describing an individual as animal-like is likely to occur (as suggested by the aforementioned results) when people are denied characteristics that set humans apart from animals. Similarly, describing an individual as lacking uniquely human characteristics is likely to lead to them being perceived as animal-like.

### **Racial Disparities and the Dehumanization of Black Individuals**

It should come as no surprise that, in the United States, racial disparities are prevalent in many aspects of life. Regarding the U.S. educational system, for instance, research suggests that Black students are targeted for disciplinary problems much more often than White students, and disproportionately receive out-of-school suspensions—which may impact identity and behavior (Grinstein-Weiss, Perantie, Taylor, Guo, & Raghavan, 2016; Gibson, Wilson, Haight, Kayama, & Marshall, 2014). In relation to health care, race has been identified as an important factor contributing to the use of rehabilitative programs that have had successful performance, as well as the employment of social and community services for the treatment of mental and substance abuse disorders (Mead, Ramos, & Grantham, 2016; Baborik, Queen, Chen, Foster, & Bangs, 2014).

Significant evidence has been found for the existence of racial disparities in the criminal justice system as well. Black Americans have been disproportionately affected by *mass incarceration*, a phenomenon characterized by the striking rise in incarcerations (500% from 1973 to 1997) in the U.S. since the late 1970s—a rise that has earned the U.S. the spot as the

developed nation with the highest incarceration rate in history, since the creation of the prison (Garland, 2001; Western, 2006). Although the bulk of the research on racial disparities in incarceration, as well as the systemic and individual injustices that gave rise to it, has been carried out in the sociological field, social psychological research into said phenomenon is not scarce.

When considering the dehumanization of Black individuals, the previously discussed findings about dehumanization are all the more relevant. More specifically, and relating to the discussion of racial disparities in incarceration, this refers to the pervasiveness of dehumanizing metaphors which, as mentioned before, function by likening outgroup members to nonhumans. Perhaps one of the most prevalent dehumanizing metaphors is the association between Black individuals and apes (Goff et al., 2008; Apel, 2009; Eberhardt, Goff, Purdie, & Davies, 2004; Goff, Jackson, Leone, Culotta, and DiTomasso, 2014). This is especially true when considering the perverse history of said association in the United States, a place where this metaphor, in one form or another, has been used as an excuse—ranging from theological, to moral, legal and even biological justifications—for the undermining and crippling of the Black body through silencing, subjugation, physical violence and death (Goff et al., 2008; Alexander, 2010).

Regarding the treatment of Black individuals, aspects as trivial as one's facial features may lead to detrimental consequences. Previous research has shown that certain facial features typically associated with Black individuals—Afrocentric features—lead to stereotyping in the same way that race does. That is, research shows that characteristics associated with Black individuals (e.g. criminal, aggressive) were considered as more likely true of people with Afrocentric features than of those without (Blair, Judd, Sadler, & Jenkins, 2002). In another study, these features were found to lead to much more serious consequences. This research's

findings suggest that individuals with more Afrocentric features (darker skin, fuller lips, wider nose) received harsher sentences than those those with less or no Afrocentric features (Blair, Judd, & Clapleau, 2004). Interestingly, these occurred regardless of the race of the individual, suggesting, as the study states, that although efforts to reduce racial biases in sentencing (in this particular state) have been successful, the stereotyping of people with Afrocentric features as aggressive and more likely to be criminal persists (Blair et al., 2004).

Furthermore—and relating more directly to dehumanization—racial disparities have also been observed in penalty outcomes. While investigating death-eligible cases that received coverage in a Philadelphia newspaper, researchers (Goff et al., 2008) attempted to assess the presence and the impact the of ape metaphor by media outlets. Coding about 800 newspaper articles for the presence of words that they found to reliably elicit the concept of “ape,” researchers found that Black defendants were described using ape-related words significantly more often than White defendants. An even more troubling finding was that Black defendants who were actually put to death were more likely to have been described using ape-like metaphors. That is, when using words that implicitly associated the defendant with apes, this individual (who more often than not, was Black) was more likely to be sentenced to death. The result held true after controlling for a variety of factors, including socioeconomic status, severity of the crime committed, total number of articles, etc. (Goff et al., 2008).

A separate study—published along with the aforementioned findings—found that, when primed with great apes, participants appeared to show more endorsement of police violence against Black criminal suspects (indicating they believed their beatings were justified) than when primed with great cats (Goff et al., 2008). These disturbing findings suggest that the Black-ape association, far from having been erased, operates implicitly through the use of metaphors and

words that evoke said association and without the need for outright comparisons that are no longer deemed civil or acceptable. They also suggest, however, that there are still very real, harmful consequences to considering Black individuals through this association, linking it even to death, the ultimate result of dehumanization (Goff et al., 2008; Opatow, 1990; Schwartz & Struch, 1989; Lifton, 1986).

Even Black children fall victim to implicit dehumanization in a similar manner. Previous research has tried to assess the perceived culpability and innocence of Black children compared to children of other race/ethnicity (Goff et al., 2014). “Children” is an interesting social category to explore in this particular manner because, as such, they are *essentialized*. Though essentialism may lead to adverse consequences, especially when negative attributes are seen as encompassing the entirety of a social group’s identity, essentializing children leads to them being perceived as universally pure, innocent and in need of protection (Goff et al., 2014). When asked to report the perceived innocence of children of different races/ethnicities who had committed crimes (misdemeanor and felony crimes), participants generally viewed Black children as less innocent than their White counterparts. This is an important finding because it suggests that children from stigmatized groups—especially Black children—are being denied characteristics universally attributed to children (Goff et al., 2014).

Furthermore, the same study assessed perceived age of children, as well as the perceived level of culpability in relation to their race and the type of crime committed. The study found the age of Black children (both in misdemeanor and felony crimes) is significantly overestimated and their perceived culpability ratings—as measured by questions such as “how responsible is he for his actions?”—were significantly higher than White children’s, who were also rated as less culpable than Latino children (Goff et al., 2014). For the most serious cases (felony crimes),

Black children were perceived as high as 4.53 years older than they in fact were, meaning some could be misperceived as adults even at the ages of 13-14 (Goff et al., 2014). This research also found that simply priming participants with ape-related words (e.g. monkey, gorilla) for 60 milliseconds made participants rate Black children as older, less essentialized as members of the “children” category, and more culpable than their White counterparts.

The authors of this past research also conducted a similar study with a sample population of police officers. This was particularly interesting because, in addition to collecting information on levels of implicit dehumanization, age overestimation and culpability levels, the study assessed the possibility that these variables would predict children’s results in relation to the criminal justice system (Goff et al., 2014). Specifically, this was done by comparing these variables with the officers’ performance and their use of force records, which they are required to complete whenever they made physical contact with a civilian. As predicted, the age of both Black and Latino children suspected of crimes were significantly overestimated, to a degree that White children were not. Children as young as 13 years old were mistakenly judged as adults by police officers—a group that is extensively trained and better capable of dealing with criminal suspects (Goff, et al., 2014). Moreover, results indicated that the more officers associated Black individuals with apes, the more they had reported using force against Black children on the job compared to children of other races; these findings were replicated in a follow-up study.

The last few findings discussed above are of particular concern, given that these racial disparities in the overestimation of age and perceived culpability of children are being observed in police officers—a segment of the population that holds a considerable degree of power and authority. These findings are all the more relevant when considered in the context of contemporary U.S. race relations and incidents of police brutality. In this country, unarmed



Black individuals, some of whom were children, have been wrongfully—and disproportionately—killed at the hands of police officers, some of whom have described the altercation and the victim in a manner that is unrealistic at best, and suggestive of implicitly dehumanizing attitudes (Sanchez, 2014). The findings here presented may offer some insight as to how Black individuals are being perceived and subsequently treated by both police officers and fellow citizens.

Taken together, the findings of all these empirical studies suggest that Black individuals—regardless of markers such as age, or socioeconomic status—fall victim to the pervasive nature of this ever-present Black-ape association, which has had detrimental, tangible real life consequences. These findings also highlight the dangers of these views actively informing people’s decision-making and judgment.

### **Media’s Role in Dehumanization of Black Individuals**

A component that may exert a unique form of influence in the spread of dehumanizing views toward Black individuals is the media outlets. The Black-ape association has been observed from mainstream popular visual culture (e.g. cartoons) throughout the 19th and 20th centuries (Goff et al., 2008; Apel, 2009) to world-famous films. One of the earliest instances of this was Coon Caricature. Born during American slavery, these type of cartoons (there are many types of derogatory cartoons about Black Americans) are likely one of the most overtly racist and disrespectful caricatures developed (See Figure 2). In these caricatures, Black individuals, referred to as “coons” (short for raccoon) were portrayed as “lazy, inarticulate and easily-frightened buffoons” who did not know their place and whose attempts to emulate the White man—from his clothing to his intellect—only proved pathetic (Pilgrim, 2000) . Intended for the enjoyment of the White population, the dehumanizing caricature—as the name itself likened

them an animal—reinforced demeaning and over-the-top stereotypes well into the 20th century, many of which are still employed today.

Newspapers, television, radio and—since relatively recent times—the internet are the tools through which information is propagated and reached. It is, therefore, no surprise that through it, we find members of stigmatized groups (e.g. Black, Latino, Muslim) being constantly targeted, explicitly or implicitly. In his book *Brown Tide Rising: Metaphors of Latinos in Contemporary American Public Discourse* (2002), Otto Santa Ana argues that, by way of metaphors that depicted the immigration of Latinos (especially Mexicans) into the U.S. as a catastrophic invasion by illegal aliens carrying diseases, the political discourse regarding Latinos in general was severely altered, and at a time when important social and political decisions were being debated. “Such metaphors shaped public opinion about Latinos” (Santa Ana, 2002, p. 7). The widespread views pinning Latinos as a “relentless flow of immigrants” coming into the U.S. and the need “to patch the hole” in reference to the border was witnessed in national discourse throughout the media. As this was practiced through discourse, the stated ideologies—filled with metaphors implicitly likening Mexican immigrants to insects and more—were confirmed and affirmed, thereby defining the oppressor (White Americans) and the oppressed (immigrants) and further propagating said distinctions (Santa Ana, 2002). Interestingly, this rhetoric has witnessed a revival, or rather a refurbishing, by prominent political figures of the present day. In his research on ape-related words—discussed in the previous section—Goff and colleagues (Goff et al., 2008), rely on and extend this media-influence hypothesis to assess representations of Black individuals as apes in the media.

A somewhat recent media example of the Black-ape association was a series of racially charged cartoons released in different newspapers in the months following the election of Barack

Obama as president. One of them—a particularly controversial political cartoon—depicted a monkey shot dead on the street, while a cop said to his partner, who was holding a smoking gun, “they’ll have to find someone else to write the stimulus bill” (Apel, 2009) (See Figure 3). The piece was in reference to Barack Obama and the stimulus bill, which some considered his first legislative victory and had without a doubt become synonymous with him. The cartoon was considered by some “a resurgence of one of the oldest racist images in the U.S.” (Apel, 2009). Although defended by some, and attacked by others, the political cartoon nonetheless portrayed the nation’s first Black president as a chimpanzee, an occurrence that, as Al Sharpton suggests, is “troubling at best” given the history of the Black-ape association (Apel, 2009; Burkeman, 2009). Was it meant to equate president Obama with a monkey? Perhaps not explicitly, as the writer stated—and defenders of the cartoon agreed—he was making a statement about the stimulus bill proposed by Obama. Specifically, that it was so bad, a chimp could have written it (the cartoon also came in the wake of the shooting of an actual chimpanzee in Connecticut, and was supposedly meant to mock this event). Whatever the case may be, this cartoon exposed in recent times, an association that—as presented before—has been historically used as an offense to Black individuals and perhaps suggests that there are ways in which this association finds its way into contemporary discussions.

Considered alongside the evidence presented, these results suggest that the Black-ape association is all but gone; rather, it has moved into a much more subtle representation that, because of its very nature, is allowed to be portrayed freely and perhaps even go unnoticed. Moreover, considering the implications of the rise of internet, particularly social networks, as a source of information and news, there are other concerns. Namely, the persuasive aspect of social networks which, by allowing one to handpick, for the most part, who and what one comes

into contact with—and thereby what kind of information one consumes—filter the content one is exposed to. Given these factors, the potential for implicitly dehumanizing views to be spread and further internalized is at its highest point.

### **The Present Study**

The present study aimed to assess the impact of views that subtly dehumanize Black individuals and their propagation through media outlets on participants' own dehumanizing attitudes; how are these views spread through the media's portrayal of Black criminals and suspects and subsequently embraced by the public? Specifically, the present study aimed to answer the following question: how does the implicitly dehumanizing stimuli toward Black individuals present in the media affect the manner in which criminals/suspects—both Black and White—are perceived by those exposed to such views? That is, does witnessing dehumanization of Black individuals affect dehumanizing views in oneself?

To my knowledge, this was the first study to empirically examine the impact of the Black-ape association in the media on people's implicit dehumanizing attitudes toward Black individuals. I hypothesized that after being exposed to implicitly dehumanizing language towards Black individuals—embedded in fabricated visual and written news reports—participants would express higher levels of implicit dehumanization toward Black individuals compared to those not exposed to such material, as measured through a dehumanization IAT and an explicit measures questionnaire. Furthermore—as consistent with research that has used dehumanization IAT (Goff et al., 2014)—I predicted that this effect of dehumanizing condition would be mediated by the race of the criminal, such that when exposed to implicitly dehumanizing stimuli, participants who read about a Black criminal would show higher levels of implicit dehumanization than those who read about a White criminal. I also hypothesized that White participants exposed to

implicitly dehumanizing stimuli about a Black criminal would show the highest levels implicit dehumanization overall. Finally, implicit dehumanization of Black individuals was, on average, is expected to positively correlate with the explicit measures questionnaire answers.

## Method

### Participants

A total of 68 participants successfully completed the present study; no participants had to be removed from the sample before data analysis. In this sample, 25 participants identified as women (36.8%), 40 as men (58.8%) and 3 as other (4.4%). Participants were recruited from the undergraduate population of Bard College and were all 18-25 years of age ( $M = 20.45$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ); they agreed to complete the study in exchange for an opportunity for win one of two \$75 gift cards. A station was set up in the most active area of campus (Campus Center) in order to advertise the study. Individuals interested in participating approached the station and were asked to complete the online eligibility questionnaire. Those whose results deemed them *eligible* for participation proceeded; those whose results deemed them *not eligible* were thanked for their interest and dismissed. When asked what might have led to a *not eligible* conclusion, I told individuals that a very specific sample was needed for the present study and that certain combinations of responses determined their eligibility. No participants or interested individuals suspected the true purpose of the questionnaire was to recruit only Black and White individuals (participants were told during debriefing). Participants could choose to participate immediately or schedule a time. Finally, 51.5% (35) of recruited participants identified as Black, and 48.5% (33) as White. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions: Dehumanizing Black (DB), Dehumanizing White (DW), Non-dehumanizing Black (NB) or Non-dehumanizing White (NW) (See Figure 4).

## Design

The present study followed a 2 (Condition: Dehumanizing or Non-dehumanizing) x 2 (Race of Assailant: Black or White) x 2 (Race of Participant: Black or White) design.

## Materials

**News Article.** All participants read about the apprehension of a suspect in a rape and attempted murder investigation. The fabricated news article described the incident in detail, what led to the apprehension of the assailant and the public's reaction, including quotes by witnesses. In it, the authorities expressed that the victim's family asked for personal information regarding the murder not to be disclosed, though through descriptions given by witnesses, the news article mentioned the victim was a young woman, approximately mid-twenties. Further, the article stated that the suspect—identified as James Davis—was apprehended, and awaited trial. The name of the assailant was chosen to appear racially ambiguous; the name “James” was the most common male first name in the U.S. population, according to the 1990 census. The name is also present in a recent list of most common first names for both Black and White males. The last name “Davis” was the seventh most common last name in the U.S. for both Black and White males, according to the 2000 census.

The conditions differed from each other in the manner in which the information was presented and in the race of the assailant. In both Dehumanizing conditions (DB and DW), the news report contained language that implicitly dehumanizes Black individuals by way of the Black-ape association (e.g. “In the footage you can clearly see the man quickly *spring* toward the victim... Police believe the man had ‘*stalked*’ the victim...”) (see Appendices A and B). In the DB condition the assailant was identified as Black by a mugshot accompanying the report, while in the DW condition, the assailant was identified as White in the same way. The implicitly

dehumanizing words incorporated into the news report were obtained from a study by Goff and colleagues (Goff, Eberhardt, Williams, & Jackson, 2008), where they found these words (e.g. *animal, brute, beast, savage, prey, stalk, etc.*) to be reliably associated with apes.

In that study, researchers (Goff, et al., 2008) chose 54 words from sample of newspaper articles, which were taken from a much larger database of articles (about 800) regarding death-eligible cases in the city of Philadelphia. The words connoted animal-like and subhuman qualities. All the articles in the database were then coded for the presence of these words. A list of the amount of times the words were used—and the context in which they were used—was created and naive raters were asked to “think of an animal” when reading each word in context. Thirty-five of these 54 words elicited terms such as *ape, gorilla*. Further, those 35 words were shown to a different group of naive raters who were asked to do the same, and 17 out of 24 raters responded with similar terms. As previously mentioned, the analyses performed in this study revealed that not only were death-eligible Black defendants significantly more likely to be described using ape-related words, but those who were actually executed were more likely to have been described using ape-like metaphors than those who were spared (Goff et al., 2008).

In the Non-dehumanizing conditions (NB and NW), participants were asked to read a version of the news report that presented the information using neutral language (see Appendices C and D). That is, words chosen to describe the assailant did not do so in any particular manner (e.g. “In the footage you can clearly see the man quickly approach the victim... Police believe he ‘followed the victim...’”) Given that the crime described is nevertheless disturbing, words describing the act itself (*horrible, disturbing, etc.*) may have expressed a certain sentiment; this, however, is not thought to affect the manipulation. In the NB condition the assailant was identified as Black by the mugshot, while in the NW condition, the assailant was White. The

language used in this version did not depict any image in particular, much less that of the animal or ape. That is, no words that have similar connotations to those used in the Dehumanizing versions of the news article were used. Moreover, in an attempt to control for potential effects of the race of the victim—effects of interracial crime/same race crime (Jennings, Richards, Smith, Bjerregaard, Fogel, 2014)—the race of the victim remained unspecified in all four conditions. To justify this, the articles and videos stated clearly that the victim’s personal information was asked not be disclosed.

**Images.** The images that were presented to the participants as that of the suspect were obtained from a popular search engine using the keywords “White male mugshot” and “Black male mugshot.” The two images chosen (see Appendix E) were shown to a separate group of 30 individuals from the same population as the study sample (Bard College), who were told the real names of the people in the images and asked if they knew who they were. None of these individuals correctly identified the people in the images. Though it is acknowledged that previous research has found that individuals with more defined Afrocentric features are presumed to have more stereotypic traits and are treated more harshly in the criminal justice system than those with less defined features (Blair et al., 2002; Blair et al., 2004; Blair, Chapleau, & Judd, 2005), there was no feasible way—in the present study—to measure Afrocentrism and control for the presence of these features in the faces used for the news reports. In attempt to control for the presence of said features, the individuals in the images used did not have any distinctive features such as tattoos or piercings, both had short hair, similar facial structure and facial hair.

**Videoclip.** The short clips presented to participants summarized the information presented in news article. That is, they briefly explained the crime, the outcome, included quotes



from witnesses, and showed the images selected as those of the assailant. Additionally, images of police activity in the neighborhood where the incident was set have taken place, and of an ambulance from the hospital where the victim was taken were presented in the newsclip. The newsclips were structured in the same manner as the news articles; that is, for each condition, the newsclip presented the corresponding image—thereby stating the race of the assailant—and used the corresponding type of language. The clips in all four conditions showed security footage of “the suspect” approaching and grabbing the victim, forcibly taking her into an alley. The footage was obtained from an Indian news website and depicts an actual attempted kidnapping. Because of the angle of the shot and the fact that it happened at night, the appearance and race of both the victim and the assailant are impossible to tell from the footage, which allows for the race of the assailant to be manipulated and the race of the victim to be kept secret for the purpose of this study. Furthermore, the date of the incident was made to match the date shown in the security footage, in order to avoid suspicion from participants.

**Dehumanization IAT.** In the present study, participants completed a computerized version of the IAT (Greenwald, McGhee & Schwartz, 1998), a procedure that assesses the relative strength of the association between a target-concept discrimination and an attribute dimension. The test began with the introduction of the target-concept discrimination; in dehumanization IAT used in the present study, this first discrimination was to distinguish stereotypically Black names (e.g. Aaliyah, Tyrone) from stereotypically White names (e.g. Molly, Jake). This and remaining discrimination tasks were performed by assigning one category to a response with the left hand, and the other category to a response with the right hand. Next, the attribute dimension was introduced—also as a two-category discrimination task—and participants categorized words as

related to “Big Apes” or related to “Big Cats.” In the third task, all categories were superimposed, with stimuli from each showing on alternate trials. In the fourth task, the order of response for Black and White names was reversed, so that the category previously signaled with the left hand was then signaled with the right, and vice versa. Finally, in the fifth task, the reversed target discrimination (White/Black names) and the attribute discrimination (Big Apes/Big Cats) were superimposed as in the third task. The idea being that, if the Black and White name categories were differentially associated with the Big Apes and Big Cats categories, participants should find one of the combined tasks (third and fifth tasks) to be significantly easier than the other (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). The difference in difficulty between these tasks provides a measure of implicit attitude differences between target categories.

The Dehumanization IAT in the present study was created by Goff and colleagues (Goff et al., 2008; Goff et al., 2014). They found, over several studies, that participants associated stereotypically Black names with Big Apes significantly more often than with Big Cats. Additionally, their dehumanization IAT results suggested that the Black-ape association was not due to a perceived link between *Blacks* and *apes* through a shared connection with the concepts of *Africa* and/or *violence*. The latter two were found to be more closely associated with *big cats*, which suggest the Black-ape association is independent of any connecting concepts. (Goff et al., 2008). Finally, participants took another IAT in which they categorized stereotypically Black and White names, as well as neutral words, as good and bad. This was done order to assess their attitudes towards Black individuals free of societal norms and values.. Even after controlling for the results of this IAT, the results of the dehumanization IAT remained significant, suggesting dehumanizing views were not present due to generally negative attitudes towards Black

individuals. Given these findings, the dehumanization IAT was considered an appropriate and reliable measure for the present study.

**Explicit Self-report Measures.** The questionnaire was created in order to obtain a measure of the extent to which participants attributed terms signifying human uniqueness or lack of it (animalistic dehumanization) to the assailant (see Appendix F). Previous research has shown that a reciprocal link exists between these two, and so the exposure to the Black-ape association was expected to affect the attribution of said characteristics (Haslam, 2006; Loughnan et al., 2009). Moreover, the questionnaire asks the if the traits also describe “individuals like him,” in order to have the participants associate the assailant to a certain social group. I expected that participants in a condition with a Black assailant—especially those in the DB condition—would answer the questionnaire in a manner that corresponds with animalistic dehumanization. That is, they would tend to agree that the assailant expresses traits indicative of animalistic dehumanization (*lack of culture, coarseness, etc.*) and disagree that the assailant expresses traits indicative of human uniqueness (*civility, moral sensibility, etc.*) (Haslam, 2006).

## **Procedure**

After completing the “eligibility questionnaire,” participants were asked to read and sign the consent form (see Appendix G); they were asked to go into a room reserved for the study, where they read and watched the corresponding news article and clip. Following this, they completed the self-report questionnaire—which was administered in pen-and-paper form—and finally, the dehumanization IAT; these were subsequently identified by the participants’ subject number, assigned at the beginning of the study. Participants were told the study “assessed the effects of different forms of stress-inducing stimuli encountered in everyday life on performance in a simple cognitive task.” Following completion of the dehumanization IAT, participants

completed a short suspicion questionnaire, in which they were asked what they felt the true purpose of the study was and whether they felt deceived at any point. Finally, participants were debriefed (see Appendix H for debriefing form), thanked and their contact information was collected for the prize raffle.

The self-report questionnaires were manually coded and prepared for data analysis. Items 6 through 10 in the questionnaire were negative, and so had to be reversed-scored; subsequently, all items were averaged to obtain a single explicit measure score for each participant. These scores were then matched to the corresponding participants in the larger dataset using their subject number.

About 15 participants, responding to the question “what do you feel was the true purpose of this study?” stated thinking that the IAT was trying to assess their connection between “Black” and apes. Though this was in fact the case, this was not expected to interfere in any serious manner with the IAT results.

## **Results**

### **Data Preparation**

**IAT Scores.** The IAT data were standardized and scored using the IAT scoring procedure recommended by Greenwald and colleagues (Greenwald et al., 2003). Through this method, a D score—the IAT score—for each participant was calculated. This D score represents participants’ difference in performance from chance, assuming that zero (chance) means no strength of implicit association in any direction. As suggested by the procedure, all trials greater than 10,000 milliseconds (5 trials across the entire dataset) were deleted. None of participants had to be deleted for having more than 10% of their trials be less than 300 milliseconds, as the procedure suggests. Next, all trials in the ‘practice’ blocks (4 and 7), as well as those of the ‘critical’ blocks

(5 and 8) were selected for the computation of the “inclusive” standard deviation (separately for ‘practice’ and ‘critical’ blocks). The mean latency responses were then computed for each of the blocks (4, 5, 7, and 8), and these were used to calculate the mean differences as follows:

$$(\text{Mean}_{\text{Block 7}} - \text{Mean}_{\text{Block 4}}) \text{ and } (\text{Mean}_{\text{Block 8}} - \text{Mean}_{\text{Block 5}})$$

Once difference scores were calculated, they were divided by the corresponding “inclusive” standard deviation (Greenwald et al., 2003). The results of said divisions were then averaged to finally arrive at *D*, the individual IAT score. Higher scores indicated a stronger association between Black names and ape-related words (Big Apes) compared to White names and cat-related words (Big Cats).

### **Preliminary Analyses**

I conducted single-sample t-test to determine if there was any statistically significant difference between the mean difference score of this sample and zero (this being an indication of no association in the IAT). Indeed, compared to zero, the sample’s mean *D* score ( $M = 0.249$ ,  $SD = 0.414$ ) was, on average, significantly higher,  $t(67) = 4.958$ ,  $p < .0001$ . Results suggest that overall, participants appeared to show an implicit association between Black names and ape-related words—as revealed by previous studies that have used dehumanization IATs (Goff et al., 2014). Though this will be discussed further in the discussion, these results may be suggestive of the deep-rooted and persistent nature of the Black-ape association.

### **Main Analyses**

Recall that the present study hypothesized the following: 1) a main effect of condition, such that participants in the Dehumanizing conditions (DB and DW) would show greater levels of dehumanization—operationalized as IAT scores—compared to those in the Non-dehumanizing conditions; 2) an interaction between Race of Assailant and Condition, such that

participants in the Dehumanizing conditions would show greater levels of dehumanization when the Race of the Assailant was Black than when it was White and; 3) an interaction among Race of Participant, Race of Assailant and Condition, such that White participants in the Dehumanizing Black (DB) condition would show the greatest level of dehumanization overall. In order to test to all the stated hypotheses, a 2 (Race of Participant: Black or White) x 2 (Race of Assailant: Black or White) x 2 (Condition: Dehumanizing or Non-dehumanizing) between-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted.

**Main Effects.** The analyses conducted revealed a main effect of Race of Assailant, such that participants who read about a White assailant ( $M = 0.333$ ,  $SD = 0.374$ ) showed a significantly stronger association between Black names and ape-related words than did participants who read about a Black assailant ( $M = 0.149$ ,  $SD = 0.443$ )  $F(1,60) = 7.321$ ,  $p = .009$ ,  $d = .405$ . No main effects of Race of Assailant had been predicted, but the direction of this particular main effect is certainly unexpected. Furthermore, analyses revealed a main effect of Race of Participant, such that Black participants were significantly more likely to associate Black names with ape-related words ( $M = 0.448$ ,  $SD = 0.283$ ) than were White participants ( $M = 0.038$ ,  $SD = 0.43$ )  $F(1,60) = 28.187$ ,  $p < .0001$ ; for graphs of these findings, see figures 5 and 6. This finding is particularly surprising because, although no main effects of Race of Participant were explicitly hypothesized, it follows from the expected three-way interaction that if a main effect of this variable were to be present, the direction would have been the opposite of what was found; this finding is discussed further in the discussion section. Finally, analyses revealed no main effect of Condition  $F(1,60) = 0.021$ ,  $p = 0.884$ . Participants in the Dehumanizing conditions (DB and DW) ( $M = 0.252$ ,  $SD = 0.334$ ) did not differ significantly from those in the Non-dehumanizing conditions (NB and NW) ( $M = 0.246$ ,  $SD = 0.51$ ) in their likelihood of

associating Black names with ape-related words. This final finding does not support the hypothesis that participants in the Dehumanizing conditions would show greater dehumanization.

**Two-way Interactions.** Furthermore, the expected interaction between Race of Assailant and Condition was not observed in the results  $F(1,60) = 1.28, p = .262$ . Participants in the DB condition ( $M = 0.18, SD = 0.334$ ) did not differ significantly from those in the DW condition ( $M = 0.307, SD = 0.33$ ) in their likelihood to associate Black names with ape-related words; no other combination between these two independent variables were found to be significant. Similarly, the analyses failed to show a significant interaction between Race of Participant and Condition  $F(1,60) = 0.032, p = .858$ . No specific combination between these two independent variables yielded any significant differences in IAT scores.

However, the analyses did reveal an interaction between Race of Participant and Condition  $F(1,60) = 4.673, p = .035$ . In order to better understand the nature of the observed interaction, t-tests for independent means were conducted separately for White and Black participants, comparing the means of the Dehumanizing conditions to those of the Non-dehumanizing conditions for both groups. The t-test revealed that for White participants, those in the Dehumanizing conditions ( $M = 0.115, SD = 0.309$ ) showed no significant difference compared to those in the Non-dehumanizing conditions ( $M = -0.067, SD = 0.55$ ),  $t(31) = 1.212, p = .235, CI.95 -0.125, 0.489, d = 0.527$ . Though there was no significant difference, the reported effect size was fairly robust. White participants in the Dehumanizing condition obtained higher IAT scores, suggesting that they associated Black names with ape-related words than those in the Non-dehumanizing condition. These results appear to be in line with the stated hypothesis, suggesting that exposure in the Dehumanizing conditions may in fact have had an effect—at

least on White participants. The t-test conducted for Black participants revealed a marginally significant difference,  $t(33) = -1.657, p = 0.092, CI.95 -0.348, 0.036, d = -0.056$ . Contrary to predictions about the effect of the Dehumanizing conditions, Black participants in the Non-dehumanizing conditions ( $M = 0.538, SD = 0.222$ ) exhibited a stronger association between Black names and ape-related words than did those in the Dehumanizing conditions ( $M = 0.382, SD = 0.309$ ).

**Three-way Interactions.** The main objective in conducting the ANOVA was to assess a three-way interaction among condition, race of assailant and race of participant; this analysis failed to detect such interaction,  $F(1,60) = 0.043, p = 0.035$ . That is, no specific combination in among the three independent variables, including the hypothesized interaction, yielded any significance. The three-way interaction hypothesis was not supported. White participants in the DB condition ( $M = 0.039, SD = 0.334$ ) did not show the strongest association between Black names and ape-related words. In fact, this was observed in the Black participants who were in the NW condition ( $M = 0.695, SD = 0.194$ ).

**Explicit Measures.** In order to assess any significant differences in the manner in which participants explicitly reported dehumanization—operationalized as a questionnaire with positive and negative traits in relation with animalistic dehumanization—a 2 (Race of Participant: Black or White) x 2 (Race of Assailant: Black or White) x 2 (Condition: Dehumanizing or Non-dehumanizing) between-subjects ANOVA was once again conducted. This analysis showed not-significant results across the board. There were no main effects of Race of Participant  $F(1,60) = 1.724, p = 0.194$ , Race of Assailant  $F(1,60) = 2.623, p = 0.151$ , or Condition  $F(1,60) = 0.894, p = 0.348$ . Similarly, no interactions were found; Race of Participant x Race of Assailant  $F(1,60) = 0.765, p = 0.385$ , Race of Participant x Condition  $F(1,60) = 1.108, p = 0.297$ , and Race of



Assailant x Condition  $F(1,60) = 1.684, p = 0.199$  were all not-significant. Furthermore, the three-way interaction among these variables  $F(1,60) = 1.109, p = 0.297$  revealed no significant results either. Potential explanations as to why the explicit measures questionnaire yielded no significant results in this analysis are offered in the discussion.

**Correlations.** Finally, correlation analysis was conducted to test the hypothesis that IAT scores would be positively correlated with the explicit measure scores. This analysis revealed no correlation between the two dependent variables,  $r(66) = -.085, p = .493$ .

## Discussion

### Review of the Study

The present empirical study was designed to assess the effects of implicitly dehumanizing stimuli, as present in the media, on the participants' own dehumanizing views. To my knowledge, this is the first time such stimuli are empirically assessed. This work stems from previous research suggesting that ever-present dehumanizing views toward Black individuals—namely their denial of uniquely human characteristics and, simultaneously, their comparison with apes—could be propagated through the media via mechanisms that work below the threshold of consciousness (Goff et al., 2008; Goff et al., 2014). Participants were assigned to one of four conditions (DB, DW, NB and NW) and were asked to read a fabricated news report whereby they were either exposed to or not exposed to implicitly dehumanizing stimuli in the form of words that previous research has shown to evoke this Black-ape association (Goff et al., 2008). Furthermore, the race of the assailant depicted in the news report was manipulated to assess its effects.

In the present study, I hypothesized that exposure to content that dehumanizes Black individuals in an implicit manner by comparing them apes would lead individuals to express

dehumanizing views themselves. More specifically, I predicted that participants in the Dehumanizing conditions would show greater levels of dehumanization—operationalized as IAT scores and responses in an explicit measures questionnaire—than those in the Non-dehumanizing conditions. Furthermore, I predicted that participants in the Dehumanizing conditions would show greater levels of dehumanization when the Race of the Assailant was Black than when it was White. It was also predicted that the Race of Participant would play a significant role, as White participants—especially those in the DB condition—would show the greatest level of dehumanization. Ultimately, my hypotheses were, for the most part, not supported. Most significant results were not consistent with the stated hypotheses; some results in fact directly contradicted them. What follows is a reflection of the results, given what the literature suggests, as well as present study limitations and considerations for future research.

### **IAT Score Results**

Perhaps the most puzzling finding in this study was that of the main effect of Race of Assailant. The direction of said finding showed that participants who read about a White assailant were more likely to associate Black names with ape-related words than those who read about a Black assailant. This would appear to suggest that the Black-ape association may be more readily prompted by a White face than by a Black one—a conclusion that contradicts not only the present hypothesis, but also the large amount of evidence suggesting otherwise. Previous research has presented a compelling case for the existence of the Black-ape association. Furthermore, it has been shown that this association appears to have some influence on visual perception. Past research found that, not only did exposure to Black faces significantly facilitate the recognition of distorted ape images, but also exposure to White faces significantly inhibited such recognition. This was labeled “White-ape inhibition effect” (Goff et al., 2008), which may

have resulted from a negative association between the two, as White individuals may be implicitly regarded as the most evolved in comparison to apes—as well as Black individuals. Further, this finding stands in stark contradiction to research that has previously used dehumanization IATs, which found that the implicit dehumanization toward Black individuals was higher when evaluating Black compared to non-Black suspects (Goff et al., 2014)

Alternatively, it could be that this connection is being made via another mechanism—namely crime. Research has found that, when primed with the concept of crime, individuals think of Black people, and vice versa (Eberhardt et al., 2004). Though unlikely, perhaps the nature news report—which featured a strikingly violent crime—led even those participants with a White assailant to show an association between Black people and apes by first making a connection between Black people and the concept of crime. This however, still fails to explain why the IAT scores for Black assailants were lower.

Though not explicitly hypothesized as a main effect of Race of Participant, I expected White participants to show higher levels of dehumanization under certain circumstances (e.g. DB condition). Some research regarding people's behavior when presented with stereotypes linking Black individuals to crime, aggression and/or violence (like shooter bias) suggests that White and Black individuals are equally likely to be influenced by these associations (Correll, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2002). Conversely, research on ethnocentrism suggests that Black individuals place greater importance on ethnicity as a collective ingroup factor than White individuals do. They also associate their ingroup with more positive characteristics than they do the outgroup, while White individuals apparently showed no such behavior (Judd, Park, Ryan, Brauer, & Kraus, 1995).

In regards to the present study, this would lead me to believe that—even if White participants were to show small effects—Black participants would not significantly dehumanize other Black people via the Black-ape association. A main effect of Race of Participant, however, results showed that Black participants were significantly more likely to associate Black names with ape-related words than White participants. It is certainly plausible that these results are in fact reflective of the pervasiveness of the Black-ape association. That is, Black individuals, as members of U.S. society—and as the targets of such associations—are likely quite familiar with the cultural stereotypes about their ingroup; their responses on their awareness of the Black-ape association certainly suggests so. As a result of this, perhaps hyperawareness of such association in this particular group led to the observed results. However, given some complications with the IAT (explained in Limitations section) the observed main effect of Race of Participant was likely due to an order effect.

An unpredicted interaction between Race of Participant and Condition presented some interesting findings. Contrary to my predictions about the effects of the manipulation (Dehumanizing conditions), there was a marginally significant effect showing that Black participants appeared to exhibit a stronger Black-ape association when presented with neutral stimuli compared to exposure to dehumanizing views. Nothing in the literature seems provide support for the observed results, for there is no reason to believe that describing a criminal in a neutral manner (as opposed to in a dehumanizing manner) would lead to dehumanizing results. However, given that these results were only marginally significant, perhaps they are not representative of any actual trend.

The interaction previously described yielded somewhat different findings when considering White participants exclusively. It appears that White participants in the

Dehumanizing conditions obtained higher IAT scores than those in the Non-dehumanizing conditions, suggesting that they expressed a stronger Black-ape association—a finding that supports the stated hypothesis about the effects of the manipulation. It should be noted that, while this conclusion was reached in light of the fairly robust effect size that was reported ( $d = .052$ ), the analyses conducted yielded no statistical significance. Therefore, these findings—likely the result of a very small sample size—and the implications that follow are to be considered cautiously and of little weight.

In line with previous findings (Goff et al., 2014), these results show that the Black-ape association is exacerbated by exposure to implicit dehumanizing stimuli toward Black individuals. Specifically, the use of words such as *brute*, *savage*, *beast*, among others, evokes this historical comparison, subsequently leading participants to implicitly dehumanize. Further, given that most participants did not report feeling deceived by the news report—leading to the assumption that they believed its content was real—these results also present supporting evidence to the already-existing body by providing more insight into the potentially dangerous role that the media may play in the propagation of implicit dehumanizing views and attitudes.

It is a well-documented happening that media figures often draw on racial stereotypes when reporting incidents of crime (Fishman, 1978; Tunnell, 1992). Rather than simply stating facts, the media may sometimes resort to sensationalism and the creation of new crimes and public menaces, with the intention of not only delivering the news, but also entertaining the public by adding a “greater sense of style” to the presentation of information (Welch, Price & Yankey, 2004; Fishman & Cavender, 1998). This so-called *Infotainment* style of news focuses on originality in the presentation of a story, looking to hook viewers/readers in (Welch et al., 2004). The manner in which the implicit dehumanizing words were used in material for the

present research is somewhat suggestive of such a style. The desire to present information in an attractive and noticeable manner—whether this occurs through overtly inflammatory opinions or the choice to use words that distort or exaggerate the facts—can lead to adverse consequences.

Finally, while there many unsupported hypothesis, as well as some unexpected findings, overall the results of the dehumanization IAT performance are consistent with those of previous findings (Goff et al., 2008; Goff et al., 2014). Preliminary analyses determined that the study sample's mean IAT score differed significantly from zero, indicating that on average, participants showed an association between Black names and ape-related words. Regardless of condition or race, participants demonstrated the Black-ape association, suggesting that this association does not rely on specific circumstances or characteristics to occur—it is enduring. The deep-rooted and persistent nature of the Black-ape association has tainted the representation of Black individuals, perhaps especially in the America, for a long time. From racist cartoons to media outlets literally using the word *wilding* to describe exclusively the behavior of Black and Latino youth (Welch et al., 2004) associated with gangs, this pervasive metaphor is arguably still at play, affecting the manner in which Black individuals are perceived and treated in many areas of life.

### **Explicit Measures Results**

In the present empirical study, the measures used I to assess the degree to which participants explicitly dehumanized Black individuals yielded no significant results. Explicit questionnaire responses were not affected by Race of Assailant, Race of Participant or Condition in any significant way. Previous research has established a correlation between the attribution of characteristics used in the explicit questionnaire of the present study and the implicit dehumanization of individuals via animal metaphors (Haslam, 2006; Loughnan et al., 2009).

This is the empirically tested connection between uniquely human emotions and human-animal comparisons—of which the Black-ape association is undoubtedly one of the most prevalent. This too failed to be established in the present study, as explicit measure questionnaire responses, on average, did not positively correlate with measures of implicit dehumanization of Black individuals (IAT scores), as I had hypothesized.

Alternately, the absence of a relationship between the two dependent measures may suggest a different finding. Perhaps it was the case that a correlation was not observed because participants in fact thought that they did not view the assailants in a different manner. That is, White and Black assailants in both the Dehumanizing and Non-dehumanizing conditions were not judged differently by participants in levels of *maturity*, *civility*, *coarseness*, *irrationality*, etc. because—explicitly—they were unable to make such distinctions. This would then suggest that explicitly, individuals are considering the assailants on equal terms regardless of their race and the manner in which they are described—a sign that individuals appear not make conclusions based on these factors. As discussed earlier, however, the findings from implicit measures suggest something quite different from this. These discrepancies, therefore, may after all be another sign that implicit dehumanizing attitudes manifest only automatically, and that allowing individuals time to write down and/or correct their judgments does not provide us with entirely truthful results on the matter.

### **Limitations**

**Participants.** The present study was conducted with a very small size, which may have led to the inconsistent and insignificant results that were observed. Initially, I sought to include at least 100 participants (50% White; 50% Black); unfortunately, circumstances allowed for the recruitment of only 68 people. This left some very specific groups within the sample population

(e.g. Black participants in the Dehumanizing-White condition) with 6-7 to run analyses with. Future research should attempt to obtain a much larger sample size.

Furthermore, the nationality of certain participants, an aspect not accounted for in the present study, might have kept a small number of participants from properly completing the dehumanization IAT. Some participants expressed concerns after completing the study that their unfamiliarity with certain names and confusion as to whether they were “Black” or “White” names might have had an impact on their performance. Given that successful performance IAT performance is contingent on participants’ ability to make this distinction, future research should attempt to recruit only American participants.

Finally, the sample for the present study was recruited from the undergraduate population of Bard College, a liberal arts institution that—due to the background of its population and the views that are predominantly held in it—may not be an accurate and representative sample of the general population of the U.S.

**Method.** Although there is evidence relating to both prejudice and dehumanization, suggesting that these two phenomena are not only conceptually different, but in practice take different routes to discrimination and lead to different outcomes (Leyens et al., 2001; Goff et al., 2008), I did not properly address the possibility that potential effects derive instead from racial prejudice and not dehumanization. Although the dehumanization IAT has been considered a reliable tool with which to measure implicit dehumanization toward Black individuals, if results were found to be guided by racial prejudice it would open findings to different interpretations.

Furthermore, it is likely that the IAT data collected in the present study were subject to an order effect. At the beginning of data collection, it became apparent to me that there was no way to categorize the participants’ IAT data according to their race; additionally, the two order of



trials for the IAT that I had created were not appearing randomly—as expected. Rather, each order responded to a number (1 or 2) that I had to enter every time. Given this situation, I decided that the first order (1) for the IAT would be used for Black participants, and the second order (2) for White participants; in this way the race would be identifiable from the data set alone.

The explicit measures questionnaire have also presented a limitation in this study. I developed this likert scale questionnaire (see Appendix F), mainly by utilizing the attributes identified in previous research as characteristic of both human uniqueness and animalistic dehumanization—which results from denial of human uniqueness attributes (Haslam, 2006; Leyens, 2001)—on the assumption that these would, on average, positively correlate with levels of implicit dehumanization (Black-ape association). Although, as discussed earlier, there is evidence that suggests metaphor-based dehumanization leads to attribution-based dehumanization and vice versa (Loughnan et al., 2009), this questionnaire was not tested for reliability or validity, which may have been why these items did not correlate with IAT results as had been hypothesized. Future research may benefit from establishing both reliability and validity of the questionnaire that would be administered, and thereby be able to make more grounded inferences from the results.

### **Future Directions**

In addition to the suggestions presented in the previous section, there are other ways in which future research can benefit. Though the best possible steps were taken in the present study to control for the well-documented effects of Afrocentric features on implicit dehumanizing attitudes (Blair, Judd, & Clapleau, 2004)—namely, attempting to match the assailants' facial features to each other as close as possible—there simply was no reliably accurate manner in

which assess this. As these features have been shown to influence perceptions of criminality and aggressiveness, future research could benefit from controlling for this variable.

Perhaps an automatic response task of some sort (e.g. IAT, GNAT) could be employed for the assessment of uniquely human characteristics in a future study. The present study struggled with the use of an explicit measures questionnaire as the means for assessing the attribution of uniquely human emotions to the assailants. If the questionnaire was—as previously suggested—not able to pick up on the attributional differences in these characteristics because of the explicit nature of it, then the use of an automatic response task could aid in providing more truthful and reliable data. If in fact the questionnaire was simply not measuring what it was supposed to, restructuring it on a computerized task prove beneficial as well. For instance, an IAT in which participants categorize uniquely human and human nature characteristics with pictures of the White and Black criminals after completing a reading similar to that of the present study.

Future research could also take the present study further by assessing whether the effects of implicitly dehumanizing stimuli, in addition to exacerbating dehumanizing views, leads endorsement of actions consistent with dehumanization. Previous research has found that priming individuals with images of apes led to the approval of violence against a Black suspect (Goff et al., 2008). If similar results were to be found from reading/watching news that implicitly dehumanizes Black suspect/criminals, this could provide stronger evidence to infer that the presence of the Black-ape association in the media could lead to adverse consequences for Black individuals.

## **Conclusion**

The present study aimed to assess the effects of implicitly dehumanizing stimuli present in the media on participants' own dehumanizing attitudes. The association between Black individuals and apes has been used throughout history reinforce negative stereotypes, as well as justify subjugation and violence against the Black body; despite its history and horrible consequences, the Black-ape association is still at play today, though arguably being employed in a more subtle way. This association relies on the portrayal of Black individuals as lacking the characteristics that separate us animals —“uniquely human” characteristics—while simultaneously attaching to them characteristics associated with animals, specifically apes. Many studies point to the media as mechanism through which these implicitly dehumanizing views are propagated. Few studies have assessed the concrete consequences of these views in the media, or their potential for abuse in said setting. To my knowledge, this was the first study to empirically examine the impact of the Black-ape association in the media on people's implicit dehumanizing attitudes toward Black individuals.

I found that overall, participants tended to implicitly dehumanize Black individuals by associating Black names with ape-related words. Interestingly, Black participants tended to show a stronger association between Black names and ape-related words; I also found some evidence suggesting that White participants' implicitly dehumanizing attitudes toward Black individuals may have been altered by their exposure to the Black-ape association in the news report. As more research is conducted on the subject, variables such as Afrocentric features should be taken into consideration. Moreover, future research could benefit from relying on automatic response tasks to further establish the link between the denial of uniquely human traits and the Black-ape association; assessments of participants' levels of endorsement for dehumanizing acts after exposure to the Black-ape association could help to infer more about the role of the media.

## References

- Apel, D. (2009). Just Joking? Chimps, Obama and Racial Stereotype. *Journal Of Visual Culture*, 8(2), 134-142.
- Bahorik, A. L., Queen, C. C., Chen, S., Foster, L. J., & Bangs, R. L. (2015). Racial disparities in community outcomes among individuals with schizophrenia and cooccurring substance use disorders. *Journal Of Social Work Practice In The Addictions*, 15(2), 165-184.
- Bar-Tal, D. (1989). *Stereotyping and prejudice: Changing conceptions* (S. H. Schwartz & N. Struch, Comps.). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Blair, I. V., Chapleau, K. M., & Judd, C. M. (2005). The use of Afrocentric Features as Cues for Judgment in the Presence of Diagnostic Information. *European Journal Of Social Psychology*, 35(1), 59-68.
- Blair, I. V., Judd, C. M., Sadler, M. S., & Jenkins, C. (2002). The role of Afrocentric features in person perception: Judging by features and categories. *Journal Of Personality And Social Psychology*, 83(1), 5-25.
- Blair, I. V., Judd, C. M., & Chapleau, K. M. (2004). The influence of Afrocentric facial features in criminal sentencing. *Psychological Science*, 15(10), 674-679.
- Burkeman, O. (2009). New York Post in racism row over chimpanzee cartoon. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/feb/18/new-york-post-cartoon-race>
- Correll, J., Park, B., Judd, C. M., & Wittenbrink, B. (2002). The police officer's dilemma: using ethnicity to disambiguate potentially threatening individuals. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 83(6), 1314.

- Cuddy, A. C., Rock, M. S., & Norton, M. I. (2007). Aid in the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina: Inferences of Secondary Emotions and Intergroup Helping. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 10(1), 107-118.
- Eberhardt, J. L., Goff, P. A., Purdie, V. J., & Davies, P. G. (2004). Seeing Black: Race, Crime, and Visual Processing. *Journal Of Personality And Social Psychology*, 87(6), 876-893.
- Opatow, S. (1990). Moral exclusion and injustice: An Introduction. *Journal of Social Issues*, 46, 1-20.
- Ekman, P. (1992). Facial expression of emotion: new findings, new questions. *Psychological Science*, 3, 34-38.
- Garland, D. (2001). *The culture of control: Crime and social order in contemporary society*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Gibson, P. A., Wilson, R., Haight, W., Kayama, M., & Marshall, J. M. (2014). The role of race in the Out-of-school suspensions of Black students: The perspectives of students with suspensions, their parents and educators. *Children And Youth Services Review*, 47(Part 3), 274-282.
- Goff, P. A., Eberhardt, J. L., Williams, M. J., & Jackson, M. C. (2008). Not yet human: Implicit knowledge, historical dehumanization, and contemporary consequences. *Journal Of Personality And Social Psychology*, 94(2), 292-306.
- Goff, P. A., Jackson, M. C., Di Leone, B. L., Culotta, C. M., & DiTomasso, N. A. (2014). The essence of innocence: Consequences of dehumanizing Black children. *Journal Of Personality And Social Psychology*, 106(4), 526-545.

- Greenwald, A. G., McGhee, D. E., & Schwartz, J. K. (2008). Measuring individual differences in implicit cognition: The Implicit Association Test. *Attitudes: Their structure, function, and consequences* (pp. 109-131). New York, NY, US: Psychology Press.
- Greenwald, A. G., Nosek, B. A., & Banaji, M. R. (2003). 'Understanding and using the Implicit Association Test: I. An improved scoring algorithm': Correction to Greenwald et al. (2003). *Journal Of Personality And Social Psychology*, 85(3), 481.
- Gregg, A. P., Seibt, B., & Banaji, M. R. (2006). Easier done than undone: Asymmetry in the malleability of implicit preferences. *Journal Of Personality And Social Psychology*, 90(1), 1-20.
- Grinstein-Weiss, M., Perantie, D. C., Taylor, S. H., Guo, S., & Raghavan, R. (2016). Racial disparities in education debt burden among low- and moderate-income households. *Children And Youth Services Review*, 65166-174.
- Harris, L. T., & Fiske, S. T. (2006). Dehumanizing the Lowest of the Low: Neuroimaging Responses to Extreme Out-Groups. *Psychological Science*, (10). 847.
- Harris, L. T., & Fiske, S. T. (2011). Dehumanized perception: A psychological means to facilitate atrocities, torture, and genocide?. *Zeitschrift Für Psychologie/Journal Of Psychology*, 219(3), 175-181.
- Haslam, N. (2006). Dehumanization: An Integrative Review. *Personality And Social Psychology Review*, 10(3), 252-264.
- Haslam, N., & Loughnan, S. (2014). Dehumanization and inhumanization. *Annual Review Of Psychology*, 65399-423.
- Haslam, N., Loughnan, S., & Sun, P. (2011). Beastly: What makes animal metaphors offensive?. *Journal Of Language And Social Psychology*, 30(3), 311-325.

- Jennings, W. G., Richards, T. N., Smith, M. D., Bjerregaard, B., & Fogel, S. J. (2014). A critical examination of the 'White victim effect' and death penalty decision-making from a propensity score matching approach: The North Carolina experience. *Journal Of Criminal Justice*, 42(5), 384-398.
- Judd, C. M., Park, B., Ryan, C. S., Brauer, M., & Kraus, S. (1995). Stereotypes and ethnocentrism: Diverging interethnic perceptions of African American and White American youth. *Journal Of Personality And Social Psychology*, 69(3), 460-481.
- Leyens, J., Paladino, P. M., Rodriguez-Torres, R., Vaes, J., Demoulin, S., Rodriguez-Perez, A., & Gaunt, R. (2000). The emotional side of prejudice: The attribution of secondary emotions to ingroups and outgroups. *Personality And Social Psychology Review*, 4(2), 186-197.
- Leyens, J., Rodriguez-Perez, A., Rodriguez-Torres, R., Gaunt, R., Paladino, M., Vaes, J., & Demoulin, S. (2001). Psychological essentialism and the differential attribution of uniquely human emotions to ingroups and outgroups. *European Journal Of Social Psychology*, 31(4), 395-411.
- Lifton, R. J. (2000). *The Nazi doctors: Medical killing and the psychology of genocide* (New ed.). New York: Basic Books.
- Loughnan, S., Haslam, N., & Kashima, Y. (2009). Understanding the relationship between attribute-based and metaphor-based dehumanization. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 12(6), 747-762.
- Mead, H., Ramos, C., & Grantham, S. C. (2016). Drivers of racial and ethnic disparities in cardiac rehabilitation use: Patient and provider perspectives. *Medical Care Research And Review*, 73(3), 251-282.

- Nosek, B. A., & Banaji, M. (2001). The go/no go association task. *Social Cognition*, 19, 625-664.
- Opatow, S. (1990). Moral exclusion and injustice: An Introduction. *Journal of Social Issues*, 46, 1-20
- Pilgrim, D. (2000). The Coon Cartoon. *Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia, Ferris State University*. Retrieved from <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/jimcrow/coon/>
- Sanchez, R. (2014). Warren Wilson says he's sorry but his conscience is clear. *CNN*. Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2014/11/25/us/darren-wilson-interview/>
- Santa Ana, O. (2002). *Brown tide rising: Metaphors of latinos in contemporary american public discourse*. Austin, TX: University of Texas, Austin.
- Schwartz, S. & Struch N. (1989) Values, stereotypes, and intergroup antagonism. In *Stereotypes and Prejudice: Changing Conceptions*, ed. D Bar-Tal, C Grauman, A Kruglanski, W Strobe, pp. 67-151. New York: Springer-Verlag
- Tileagă, C. (2007). Ideologies of moral exclusion: a critical discursive reframing of depersonalization, delegitimization and dehumanization. *The British Journal Of Social Psychology / The British Psychological Society*, 46(Pt 4), 717-737
- Viki, G. T., Winchester, L., Titshall, L., Chisango, T., Pina, A., & Russell, R. (2006). Beyond secondary emotions: The infrahumanization of outgroups using human-related and animal-related words. *Social Cognition*, 24(6), 753-775.
- Western, B. (2006). *Punishment and inequality in america*. New York, NY: The Russell Sage Foundation.



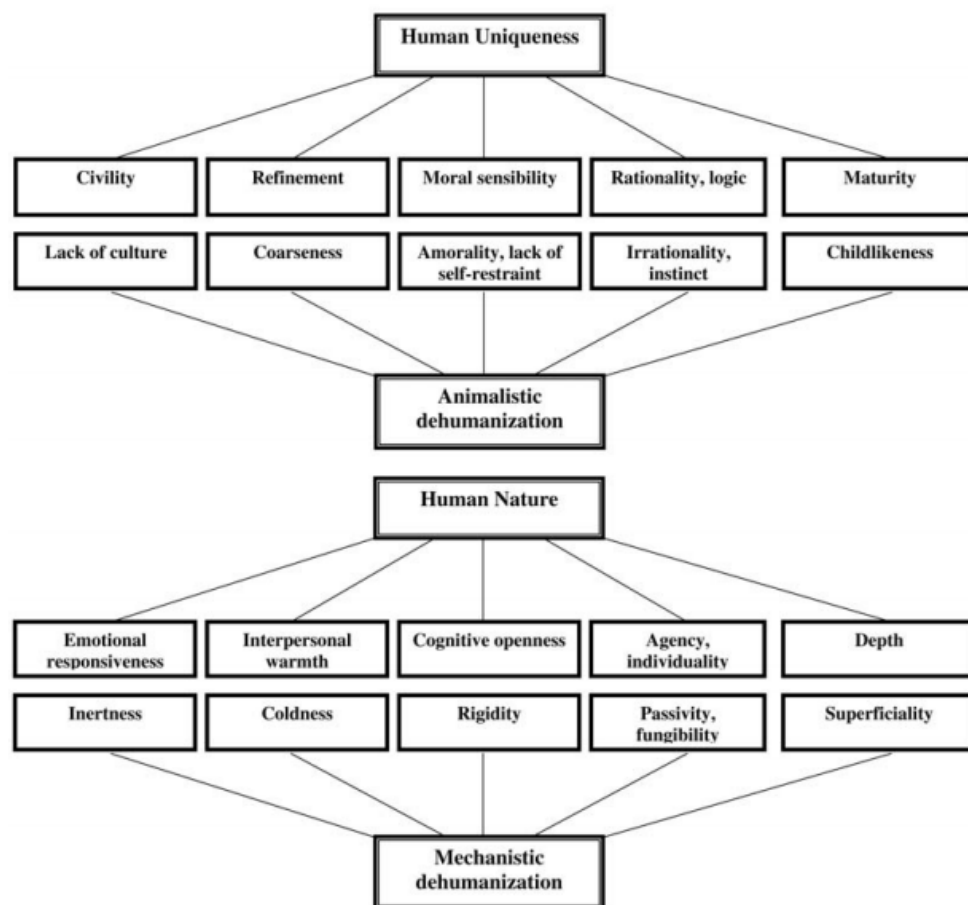


Figure 1. Proposed link between humanness attributes and corresponding forms of dehumanization. Reprinted from “Dehumanization: An Integrative Review,” by Haslam, N. (2006). *Personality And Social Psychology Review*, 10(3), 252-264.



*Figure 2.* Example of Coon Caricature from 19th and 20th century from “Racist Postcards in United States: 1890-1960” by Karen F. Dimanche Davis.



Figure 3. "New York Post cartoon depicts police shooting a chimpanzee." Reprinted from "New York Post in racism row over chimpanzee cartoon," Burkeman O. (2009) *The Guardian*.

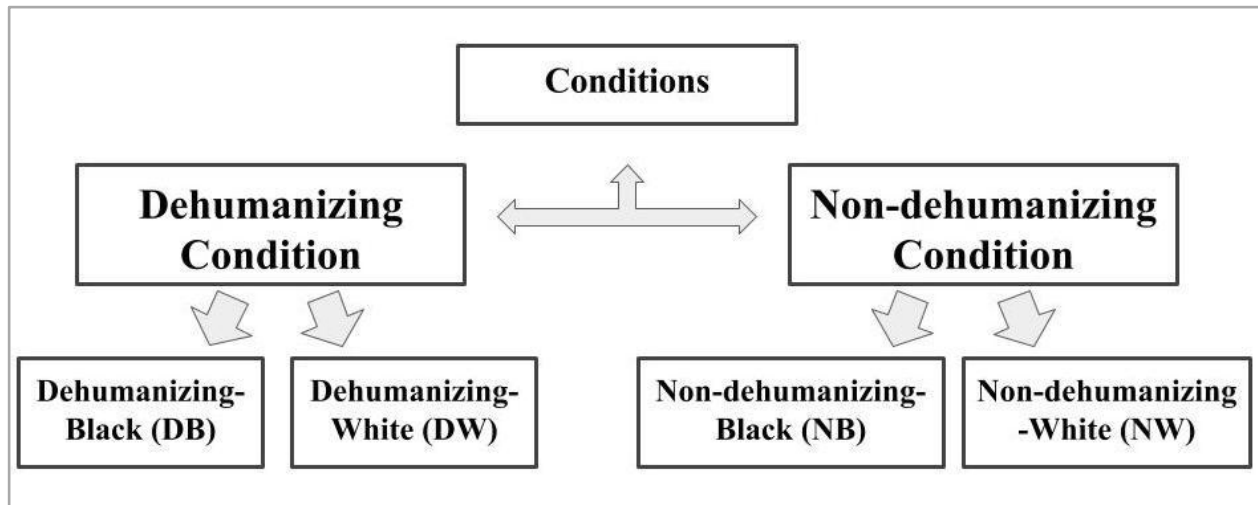
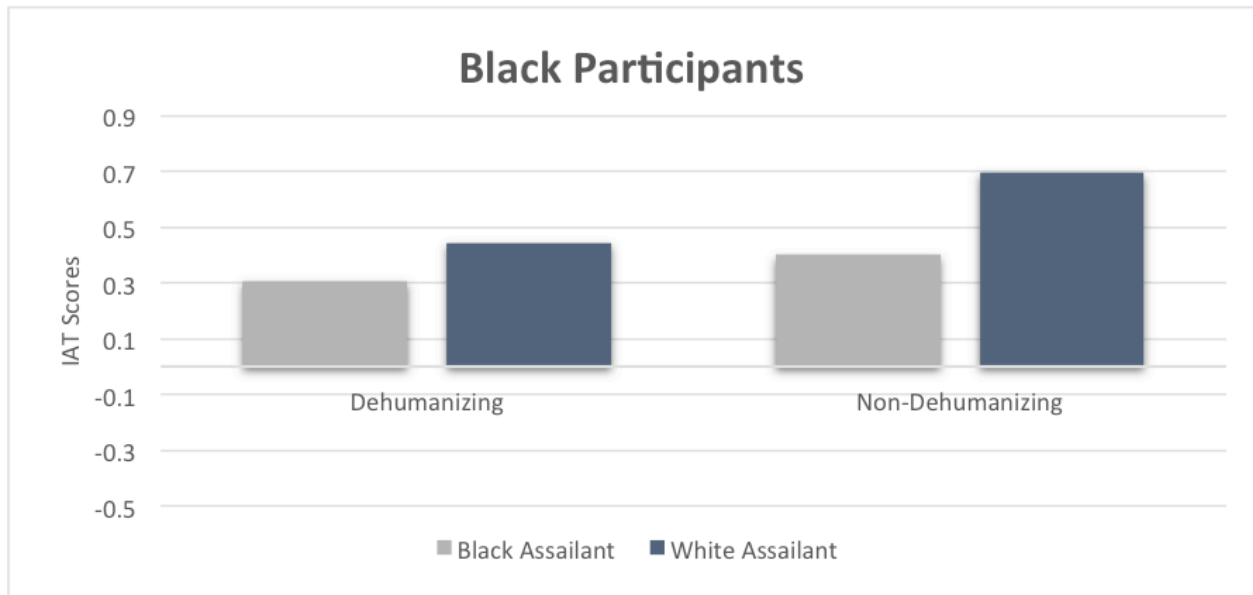


Figure 4. Diagram depicting the organization of study conditions.



*Figure 5.* Bar graph depicting the Black participants' IAT scores by race of assailant and condition (Dehumanizing and Non-Dehumanizing).

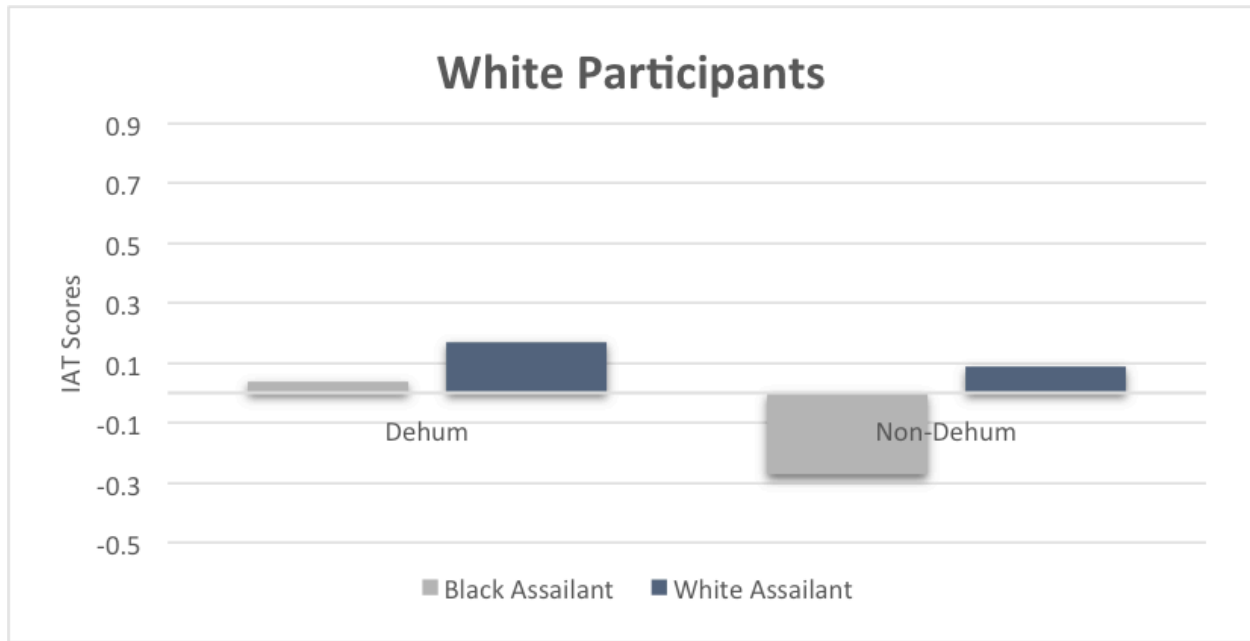


Figure 6. Bar graph depicting White participants' IAT scores by race of assailant and condition (Dehumanizing and Non-Dehumanizing).

## Appendix A—Dehumanizing Black Cond. News Article

### **Main Suspect in Sexual Assault Investigation Arrested**

By Jacob Williams

May 2, 2016 5:30PM

Ozone Park, Queens— Last night NYPD officers arrested their main suspect in a pending sexual assault and attempted murder investigation. James Davis—a 28 year-old resident of the area—was apprehended after a seven-day search by police.

Davis was wanted for the rape and attempted murder of a woman, which occurred last Saturday at around 1 A.M. An anonymous tip informed authorities that an individual who matched the description of the assailant was spotted entering an apartment building just a few blocks away from the crime scene, the same night of the attack.

The man was identified as James Davis, a tenant in the building. Police had been monitoring his home for about a week, with no sightings of Davis. Last night, however, they spotted him entering the building.

Davis matched the description of the assailant that night, given by the victim and witnesses. Police also stated that the victim identified Davis as her attacker from photos of several individuals.

At approximately 1 A.M. on Saturday, according to NYPD, Davis approached the victim from the back as she waited at a bus stop, forcefully taking her to a deserted alley. Though security footage shows it looked like a busy night, nobody offered immediate assistance. Once in the alley, Davis pulled a gun on the victim and proceeded to strike her and sexually abuse her.

“In the footage you can clearly see the man quickly spring toward the victim, aggressively picking her up and taking her out of sight,” said NYPD officer Brady. Though the video also reveals it was a busy night on Atlantic Avenue, no one appears to notice the incident. Police believe the man had “stalked the victim” for some time prior to attacking her. Furthermore, there seems to be no particular motive behind the attacker’s actions; “this man—as horrible as it sounds—was on the prowl that night. It really could have been anyone,” added officer Brady. In an attempt to free herself, the victim apparently reached for the weapon. After a brute struggle, however, Davis gained control of the weapon and fired at the victim, who was still on the ground, striking her in the lower abdomen area.



Several people contacted 911 regarding the shot and screams coming from the alley. The victim—whose name and other personal information was asked not be disclosed—was transferred to Jamaica Hospital Medical Center, where she remains in stable condition. In addition to the gunshot, the victim sustained serious scratches and punches.

A few Ozone Park residents were interviewed about the events. “It scares me to know I’ve been living so close to this monster,” said another tenant from the building where the suspect resides, “so barbaric. I-- I’m just shocked.” A woman interviewed last week, who witnessed the savage offense, described it as wild. “I hesitated to call police because I wasn’t sure what was happening,” said the woman, “but I figured ‘better safe than sorry’ I mean, it just looked wild. And to later find out that this animal trapped her and abused her in that alley... it makes me feel really unsafe around this area, you know, to think a stranger can crawl out of nowhere and do such a thing.”

Davis is currently detained and awaits trial. This was the latest episode in a stampede of predatory violence throughout the Queens-Long Island area that has been occurring over the last 2 months.

## Appendix B—Dehumanizing White Cond. News Article

### **Main Suspect in Sexual Assault Investigation Arrested**

By Jacob Williams

July 11, 2016 5:30PM

Ozone Park, Queens— Last night NYPD officers arrested their main suspect in a pending sexual assault and attempted murder investigation. James Davis—a 28 year-old resident of the area—was apprehended after a seven-day search by police.

Davis was wanted for the rape and attempted murder of a woman, which occurred last Sunday at around 1 A.M. An anonymous tip informed authorities that an individual who matched the description of the assailant was spotted entering an apartment building just a few blocks away from the crime scene, the same night of the attack.

The man was identified as James Davis, a tenant in the building. Police had been monitoring his home for about a week, with no sightings of Davis. Last night, however, they spotted him entering the building.

Davis matched the description of the assailant that night, given by the victim and witnesses. Police also stated that the victim identified Davis as her attacker from photos of several individuals.

At approximately 1 A.M. on Sunday, according to NYPD, Davis approached the victim from the back as she waited at a bus stop, forcefully taking her to a deserted alley. Though security footage shows it looked like a busy night, nobody offered immediate assistance. Once in the alley, Davis pulled a gun on the victim and proceeded to strike her and sexually abuse her.

“In the footage you can clearly see the man quickly spring toward the victim, aggressively picking her up and taking her out of sight,” said NYPD officer Brady. Though the video also reveals it was a busy night on Atlantic Avenue, no one appears to notice the incident. Police believe the man had “stalked the victim” for some time prior to attacking her. Furthermore, there seems to be no particular motive behind the attacker’s actions; “this man—as horrible as it sounds—was on the prowl that night. It really could have been anyone,” added officer Brady. In an attempt to free herself, the victim apparently reached for the weapon. After a brute struggle, however, Davis gained control of the weapon and fired at the victim, who was still on the ground, striking her in the lower abdomen area.



Several people contacted 911 regarding the shot and screams coming from the alley. The victim—whose name and other personal information was asked not be disclosed—was transferred to Jamaica Hospital Medical Center, where she remains in stable condition. In addition to the gunshot, the victim sustained serious scratches and punches.

A few Ozone Park residents were interviewed about the events. “It scares me to know I’ve been living so close to this monster,” said another tenant from the building where the suspect resides, “so barbaric. I-- I’m just shocked.” A woman interviewed last week, who witnessed the savage offense, described it as wild. “I hesitated to call police because I wasn’t sure what was happening,” said the woman, “but I figured ‘better safe than sorry’ I mean, it just looked wild. And to later find out that this animal trapped her and abused her in that alley... it makes me feel really unsafe around this area, you know, to think a stranger can crawl out of nowhere and do such a thing.”

Davis is currently detained and awaits trial. This was the latest episode in a stampede of predatory violence throughout the Queens-Long Island area that has been occurring over the last 2 months.



### Appendix C—Non-Dehumanizing Black Cond. News Article

#### **Main Suspect in Sexual Assault Investigation Arrested**

By Jacob Williams

May 2, 2016 5:30PM

Ozone Park, Queens— Last night NYPD officers arrested their main suspect in a pending sexual assault and attempted murder investigation. James Davis—a 28 year-old resident of the area—was apprehended after a seven-day search by police.

Davis was wanted for the rape and attempted murder of a woman, which occurred last Saturday at around 1 A.M. An anonymous tip informed authorities that an individual who matched the description of the assailant was spotted entering an apartment building just a few blocks away from the crime scene, the same night of the attack.

The man was identified as James Davis, a tenant in the building. Police had been monitoring his home for about a week, with no sightings of Davis. Last night, however, they spotted him entering the building.

Davis matched the description of the assailant that night, given by the victim and witnesses. Police also stated that the victim identified Davis as her attacker from photos of several individuals.

At approximately 1 A.M. on Saturday, according to NYPD, Davis approached the victim from the back as she waited at a bus stop, forcefully taking her to a deserted alley. Though security footage shows it looked like a busy night, nobody offered immediate assistance. Once in the alley, Davis pulled a gun on the victim and proceeded to strike her and sexually abuse her.

“In the footage you can clearly see the man quickly approach the victim, picking her up and taking her out of sight,” said NYPD officer Brady. Though the video also reveals it was a busy night on Atlantic Avenue, no one appears to notice the incident. Police believe the man had “followed the victim” for some time prior to attacking her. Furthermore, there seems to be no particular motive behind the attacker’s actions; “this man—as horrible as it sounds—was out to assault that night. It really could have been anyone,” added officer Brady. In an attempt to free herself, the victim apparently reached for the weapon. After some struggling, however, Davis gained control of the weapon and fired at the victim, who was still on the ground, striking her in the lower abdomen area.



Several people contacted 911 regarding the shot and screams coming from the alley. The victim—whose name and other personal information was asked not be disclosed—was transferred to Jamaica Hospital Medical Center, where she remains in stable condition. In addition to the gunshot, the victim sustained serious cuts and bruises.

A few Ozone Park residents were interviewed about the events. “It scares me to know I’ve been living so close to this man,” said another tenant from the building where the suspect resides, “so cruel. I-- I’m just shocked.” A woman interviewed last week, who witnessed the cold-blooded offense, described it as intense and disturbing. “I hesitated to call police because I wasn’t sure what was happening,” said the woman, “but I figured ‘better safe than sorry’ I mean, it just looked very intense... very disturbing. And to later find out that this man took her and abused her in that alley... it makes me feel really unsafe in general, but especially around here, you know, to think that a stranger can come out of nowhere and do such a thing.”

Davis is currently detained and awaits trial. This was the latest episode in a streak of sexual violence throughout the Queens-Long Island area that has been occurring over the last 2 months.

## Appendix D—Non-Dehumanizing White Cond. News Article

### **Main Suspect in Sexual Assault Investigation Arrested**

By Jacob Williams

July 11, 2016 5:30PM

Ozone Park, Queens— Last night NYPD officers arrested their main suspect in a pending sexual assault and attempted murder investigation. James Davis—a 28 year-old resident of the area—was apprehended after a seven-day search by police.

Davis was wanted for the rape and attempted murder of a woman, which occurred last Sunday at around 1 A.M. An anonymous tip informed authorities that an individual who matched the description of the assailant was spotted entering an apartment building just a few blocks away from the crime scene, the same night of the attack.

The man was identified as James Davis, a tenant in the building. Police had been monitoring his home for about a week, with no sightings of Davis. Last night, however, they spotted him entering the building.

Davis matched the description of the assailant that night, given by the victim and witnesses. Police also stated that the victim identified Davis as her attacker from photos of several individuals.

At approximately 1 A.M. on Sunday, according to NYPD, Davis approached the victim from the back as she waited at a bus stop, forcefully taking her to a deserted alley. Though security footage shows it looked like a busy night, nobody offered immediate assistance. Once in the alley, Davis pulled a gun on the victim and proceeded to strike her and sexually abuse her.

“In the footage you can clearly see the man quickly approach the victim, picking her up and taking her out of sight,” said NYPD officer Brady. Though the video also reveals it was a busy night on Atlantic Avenue, no one appears to notice the incident. Police believe the man had “followed the victim” for some time prior to attacking her. Furthermore, there seems to be no particular motive behind the attacker’s actions; “this man—as horrible as it sounds—was out to assault that night. It really could have been anyone,” added officer Brady. In an attempt to free herself, the victim apparently reached for the weapon. After some struggling, however, Davis gained control of the weapon and fired at the victim, who was still on the ground, striking her in the lower abdomen area.



Several people contacted 911 regarding the shot and screams coming from the alley. The victim—whose name and other personal information was asked not be disclosed—was transferred to Jamaica Hospital Medical Center, where she remains in stable condition. In addition to the gunshot, the victim sustained serious cuts and punches.

A few Ozone Park residents were interviewed about the events. “It scares me to know I’ve been living so close to this man,” said another tenant from the building where the suspect resides, “so cruel. I-- I’m just shocked.” A woman interviewed last week, who witnessed the cold-blooded offense, described it as intense and disturbing. “I hesitated to call police because I wasn’t sure what was happening,” said the woman, “but I figured ‘better safe than sorry’ I mean, it just looked very intense... very disturbing. And to later find out that this man took her and abused her in that alley... it makes me feel really unsafe in general, but especially around here, you know, to think that a stranger can come out of nowhere and do such a thing.”

Davis is currently detained and awaits trial. This was the latest episode in a streak of sexual violence throughout the Queens-Long Island area that has been occurring over the last 2 months.

Appendix E—Images



White, Dustin



Stephens-Maddox, Rasheed

Appendix F—Explicit Measures Questionnaire

To what extent do you agree that the actions of Davis and individuals like him express the following traits:

## 1. Civility

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Not sure	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 2. Refinement

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Not sure	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 3. Moral Sensibility

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Not sure	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 4. Rationality, logic

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Not sure	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 5. Maturity

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Not sure	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 6. Lack of culture

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Not sure	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 7. Coarseness

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Not sure	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 8. Amoral, lack of self-restraint

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Not sure	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 9. Irrationality, instinct

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Not sure	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 10. Childlikeness

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Not sure	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 11. How accurate do you think the description of Davis as “an animal” is, given his actions?

Very accurate	Accurate	Somewhat accurate	Not sure	Somewhat inaccurate	Inaccurate	Very inaccurate
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## 12. Are you aware of the stereotype associating Black people to apes?

**YES****NO**

## 13. What do you feel was the purpose of the study?

## 14. Did you feel deceived at any point?

**YES****NO**

## 15. If so, how?

Appendix G—Consent Form**Consent Form****Thank you for expressing interest in this research!**

**Background.** The purpose of the present psychology study is to assess the effects of different forms of media on performance in a simple computer task.

**What will happen in this study?** If you agree and are eligible to participate, you will be asked to read and/or watch a video about one of several stress-inducing stimuli encountered often by people on a daily basis. Once you've done the reading and watched the video, you will complete a simple word-sorting task in a computer and finally, you will complete a questionnaire. The study will take approximately 20 minutes.

**Risks and Benefits.** Though you will not receive any direct benefits from participating in this study, you may gain some insight about how different forms of information and the media affect your everyday life. Furthermore, your participation would be helping to increase our knowledge of human behavior in general.

As a participant, you will not face any serious risks in this study. However, some participants may feel uncomfortable with the reading/viewing material that they might be exposed to; some of the material presents issues such as child abuse and sexual assault. Though you may be exposed to stimuli that could be considered mildly disturbing and/or could cause mild anxiety, the level at which this would occur is similar to that of stimuli encountered on a daily basis (in news reports, social media, etc.).

**Compensation.** In exchange for your participation in this study, you will be entered into a lottery for a chance to win one of two \$75 Amazon gift cards. Baked goods are also available at the study site.

**Your rights as a participant.** You should keep in mind that your participation is completely voluntary. You may leave the study at any time and you will still be fully compensated. The primary researcher will disclose additional information at the end of the study.

**Confidentiality.** Individuals must be 18 years of age or older in order to participate. Any personal information you provide, as well as the data corresponding to your participation, will remain confidential. That is, only the primary researcher and the advisor will have access to such information, which will be kept in the Social Psychology Lab here at Bard. Data obtained from your participation will be assigned a number so that your name is not directly attached to it. Moreover, your consent form will be kept separately to ensure your identity remains anonymous.

Should you have any questions or concerns about this study, or would like to be made aware of its results, please contact the primary researcher, Joshua Velette, at [jv1398@bard.edu](mailto:jv1398@bard.edu) or the study's supervisor, Professor Kristin Lane, at [lane@bard.edu](mailto:lane@bard.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Bard College Institutional Review Board: [irb@bard.edu](mailto:irb@bard.edu).

By signing below, you are assuring the researcher that you have read and understood this document and agree to participate:

---

Signature

---

Date

## Appendix H—Debriefing Form

### **Debriefing Form**

Thank you for participating!

The real goal of this study was to assess the effects of implicitly dehumanizing stimuli present in the media on the participants' own dehumanizing views. The study stems from previous research suggesting that dehumanizing views could potentially be spread through mechanisms that work below the threshold of consciousness. The news report you read was fabricated by the researcher for the purpose of this research. You received one of two reports: if you were in the dehumanizing condition, you read the version that implicitly dehumanizes the individual at hand; if you were in the non-dehumanizing condition, you read the version that describes the incident using neutral (unbiased) language.

#### ***What is the IAT?***

The Implicit Association Test, or IAT measures less conscious associations between words pairings. If you would like try some computerized IATs or learn more about how this works just visit <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>.

#### ***Big Apes & Big Cats?***

Previous studies have found that certain Black people are dehumanized by being associated with apes. Certain words may make this association stronger, even without the individual being fully aware of it. Unsurprisingly, it's been shown that these words are used more often to describe African Americans, and that criminals on death row described with these words were statistically more likely to be actually put to death. In the IAT, therefore, results should indicate a strong association between Black names and words related to big apes.

#### ***Why is this important?***

Studies such as this one may further expand our understanding of implicit bias and the manner in which beliefs—both negative and positive—are spread. Furthermore, understanding how these views are spread may shed some light on the many factors that contribute to racial disparities in general, but more specifically within the American culture, as well as its justice system.

Should you have any questions or concerns about this study, or would like to be made aware of its results, please contact the primary researcher, Josh Velette, at [jv1398@bard.edu](mailto:jv1398@bard.edu) or the study's supervisor, Professor Kristin Lane, at [lane@bard.edu](mailto:lane@bard.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Bard College Institutional Review Board: [irb@bard.edu](mailto:irb@bard.edu).



Appendix I—Certification to work with human subjects





Appendix J—IRB Approval**Bard College**

Institutional Review Board

22 November 2016

Re: Excluded from Humanity: A Study of the Effects of Implicit Dehumanizing Views Toward Black Individuals on Implicit and Explicit Attitudes

**DECISION: APPROVED**

Dear Joshua,

The Bard Institutional Review Board has reviewed your response to the question about your proposal. (I refer to what I believe is the formal response the top of your attachment, not the notes at the bottom of the page.) Your project is approved through 3 May 2017. Your case number is 2016NOV22-VEL.

Please notify the IRB if your methodology changes.

We wish you success with your Senior Project research.

Sincerely,

Simeen Sattar  
[sattar@bard.edu](mailto:sattar@bard.edu)  
IRB Chair

cc: Kristin Lane